Vermont Life

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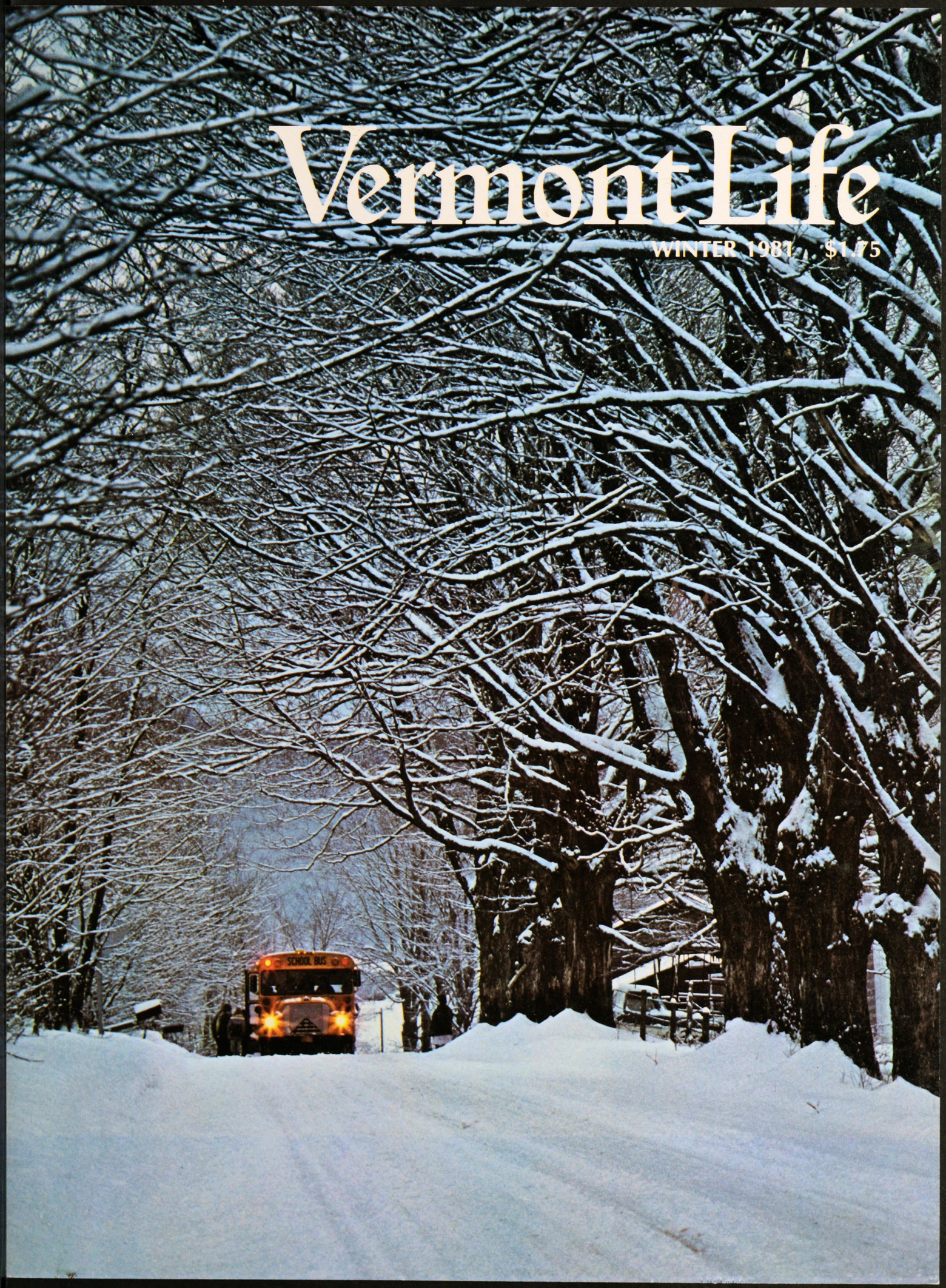

Private View

Pudding Hill in Lyndonville,
late afternoon in January,
by Paul Babcock.

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Front cover: *George A. Robinson photographed this Winter morning scene in Jericho.*

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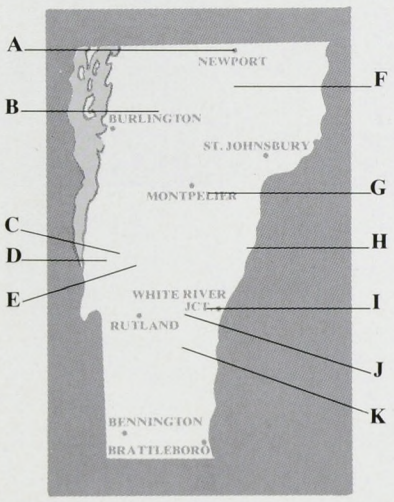

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Barton

Winter in the Northeast Kingdom

By Lance Khouri
Photographs by Richard Howard

THE NAME "Northeast Kingdom" was coined in a Lyndonville speech by Vermont's archetypical political bard, George Aiken. It was 1949 and Aiken was serving his state in Washington D.C. as a senator. Then as now, the Northeast Kingdom refers to the land and inhabitants of Orleans, Essex, and Caledonia Counties: the northeastern corner of Vermont. The name inspires curiosity and conjures images of a rugged terrain and independent people, of a region where Winter winds blow a little colder, snows drift a little deeper, and people grow a little hardier. A Winter visit to the Orleans County Village of Barton is an adventure into a different kind of America, an America that may be disappearing rapidly. Barton is Bert the Barber's America, and as such it is in demand.

Bert the Barber turns slowly in his small, one-chair shop and his arms make a sweeping gesture that says proudly, "This is mine! My creation!"

The gesture encompasses deer antlers perched upon a fluorescent light, a patched metal ceiling, bare wood flooring and unpainted cabinets. It includes walls covered with military and sporting photographs and news clippings, as well as rabbits' feet, a deer tail, partridge feathers, astrology charts, and plastic flowers draping a mirror; all this and the hair cutting accouterments, too.

Seventy-five-year-old Bert, more formally known as G. Albert Lepine, tells this story: "Last year a lawyer from Washington, D.C. came by and offered me $1,000 for the shop, as is. He had a spare room in his house in Washington and he wanted to move my shop there and show it to people so he could say 'Here's Bert's barbershop!' "

Of course the offer was ridiculously low, but the lawyer was probably figuring in the cost of transportation. It's not difficult to imagine Bert's shop on display

in a Georgetown brownstone, and the lawyer, after freshening cocktails for the appropriate guests, exhibiting it with such words as these: "Can you believe that this really exists? I found it in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, in a little village called Barton, not far from the Canadian border." It's simple to anticipate the guests' reactions: How quaint! How *real*!

Unpretentious is a better description. The lawyer might find it easier to buy a Summer home in the Lake Region and invite his friends for visits, as many already do. That way they could take in the view from Bert's window as they received a $4 haircut. They could listen to his stories, and experience the rest of a Northeast Kingdom community that is no less charming than Bert himself, his shop, and its view. And in the Winter, more often than not, they would leave.

The most striking thing about Barton is the cheerfulness of its people. At 64, R. P. Webster is a newlywed. (There's a fair number of two-initialled men here who are addressed also by a first name, or nickname, but rarely by the conventional title of Mr.). "I elope once every 40 years," grins Ray Webster (nicknamed "Bruz") in the office of his Getty gas station off U.S. Route 5. He is a historian and oil distributor, a downhill skier since the age of two, and a man who's luckier than a cat with ten lives.

The story goes, and it's not apocryphal, that Webster used to spend Winter days as a boy sledding down Eastern Avenue. He glided over the tracks, between the wheels, and under the moving cars of the old Boston Maine Railroad. The Boston Maine is now the Canadian Pacific, with one run of freight passing through Barton daily. "Years ago we had six passenger trains come through town every day," recalls Webster. "Barton was a booming industrial and resort town. We had three big hotels, five or six granite sheds, 18 factories, and a newspaper, The *Orleans County Monitor*.

"In 1934 I ran a boat livery across Crystal Lake. I met a train to carry a gentleman across the lake where his two daughters were vacationing in a cabin. Just as he got out of the livery boat I recognized him. It was Babe Ruth."

The Babe isn't coming to Barton anymore and neither is anyone else of his stature. Something happened here and no one is exactly sure what it was. "Things just ran out," Webster says. "I'm sure the flood of 1927 had nothing to do with it. But the granite sheds ran out of granite. Changing times and technology did in Barton's industry. Fires burned down two of our hotels. Progress killed the other. It wasn't used. It wasn't needed anymore."

The Blue Spruces rooming house is right across Route 16 from the three-story, brick Barton Academy and Graded School. The Converse-Rushford Funeral Home is on one side of the rooming house, the Bethel Full Gospel Church is on the other, and the Barton River flows by in the back yard. There's a vacant room for rent in the Blue Spruces, and conceivably a person could be baptized, housed, schooled, married, and carried straight to the cemetery without moving more than a building away from it.

"One thing you'll learn is that people around here aren't in too much of a hurry about anything," observes Michael Okuszki, who, with his wife Alvina, owns the Blue Spruces. While this statement appears true, there is nevertheless a surprising amount of activity for a village of little more than a thousand people.

"During the Summer we get traffic," Alvina says. "People passing through on their way to somewhere else stay here overnight. There's a big fair in August and then you can't find enough room around here. And there's a funeral parlor next door so we get roomers who come for funerals. I've had interesting people here; people from France, from Italy."

If you drive on Route 5 alongside the railroad tracks, past Crystal Lake, Barton will barely slow you down. It looks linear, small, a bit rundown. From Interstate 91 travellers see an illusion of largeness and

growth. Barton, with its water, mountain background, and its church steeples aspiring heavenwards, is far prettier than most towns seen from interstates. But driving into the village on Route 16 from the south it is necessary to slow down, if only because of the black-top's crater-like topography. The urge to stop and walk around is overwhelming; for this is a walker's town, a place made for the promenade, an up and down town, with hills and crashing waterfalls. The architecture of the old churches, the brick work of the municipal building, the library, and Barton Academy — all *sans* grafitti — attract the eye like a magnet. Even more interesting, however, are the signs of prosperity faded. This is the other side of the picture postcard, the ski resort that didn't develop, the American dream stuck in a post-industrial, petroleum-lean wail. Look quick and catch it; when you look again, it will be something else.

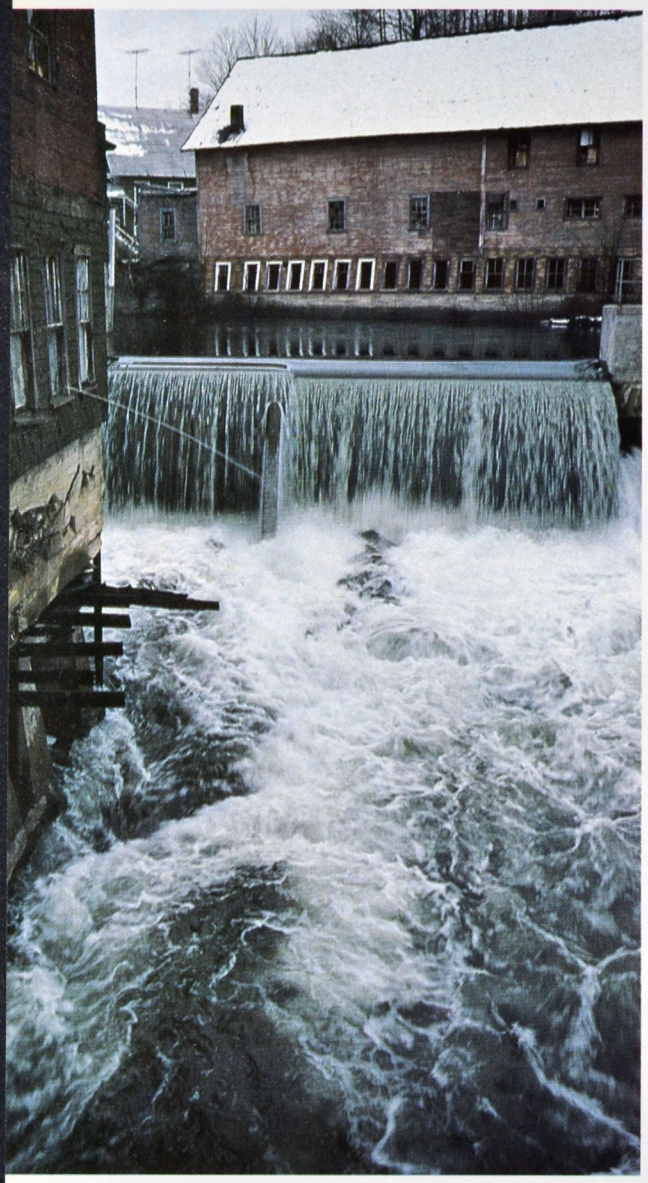
Citizens of Barton work hard and most don't earn a great deal of money. But they have accepted the challenge of life in the Northeast Kingdom and there is not much complaining. Some of Barton's finest include Bert "The Barber" Lepine, lower left; Ray "Bruz" Webster in his Getty Station, center; Chris Braithwaite, seated below with the staff of the Barton "Chronicle," and Michael and Alvina Okuszki, owners of the Blue Spruces rooming house.

"The people here work very, very hard, and by comparison they earn very, very little." The speaker is Barton *Chronicle* editor Chris Braithwaite, a 36-year-old big city transplant. Braithwaite, clad in a plaid shirt, blue corduroys and insulated work boots, sits by an old, oak, roll top desk, opposite a cast iron box stove marked: J. W. Murkland, Barton, Vt. The newspaper building occupies a small part of what once was the foundation of the Murkland Foundry. Rusted drive shafts that carried power to the company lie twisted on the bank of a short but ferocious (and unnamed) stream which runs from Crystal Lake into the Barton River.

"I was a business reporter for the *Toronto Globe & Mail*, and my wife and I had twin sons just over a month old when we came here in 1970," Braithwaite recollects. "It was a fairly classic late sixties back-to-the-country move. We had friends who bought a farm in West Glover and were trying to do subsistence farming. The place is called Entrophy Acres. We settled there, and today we live in the farmhouse next door."

A triangular traffic island marks the spot in Barton where Routes 16 and 5 converge. Across the road from one side of the island is the village's municipal building. In it are offices for the village clerk and the village board of trustees, and the veterans' rooms, used by the American Legion. There is also a dining room for banquets and dances, and an auditorium which acts as a movie theater and hosts Barton's town meeting every other year. At ground level there is a garage that houses trucks and equipment for the village's Street Department.

Looking out at it all from his insurance office is Kenneth Elliott, an industrial arts teacher at nearby Lake Region High



School. Elliott is also a member of the village's three-person board of trustees. "A lot of people around here work three jobs," he says. "It's how they make ends meet.

"This year town meeting is in Orleans, and in 1982 it'll be in the auditorium," he continues. "The reason we alternate is because Barton town includes the village of Barton, as well as the town, and the village of Orleans, too. Many years ago most of the produce for the area came to Barton's Landing by rail. Today, Barton's Landing is Orleans village.

"Our electric company has the second lowest power rates in the state. We have a diesel and hydroelectric plant in West Charlestown that utilizes the Clyde River coming out of Lake Salem. We have over 200 miles of power line maintained by a superintendent and two linesmen. It takes four operators at the plant, plus the efforts of a secretary and the village manager to keep the juice flowing."

In addition to electricity, a trustee's responsibilities in Barton include supervision of the Water Department and Street Department, which are handled by the same two employees. "All departments interchange," says Elliott. "The village has ten miles of road and water lines. Our water is great. It comes from May Pond and passes through a sand filtering facility. The workers pitch in together if a water line or sewer line breaks. They plow, sand, and salt the roads."

Trustee Elliott sums up the state of affairs in his village: "Barton is definitely a bedroom community. It's a typical Northeast Kingdom community and the trouble here is there are very few large employers. We feed labor to Newport; to Derby Line where there is Butterfield's, a machine shop; to Lyndonville Tap & Die, another machine shop in Lyndonville. The biggest local company is the Ethan Allen furniture factory in Orleans, which employs about 700 people.

"Barton village is the hub for many small, surrounding communities. But unfortunately, except for the farm kids who

Though the stream in midtown Barton is no longer used for hydroelectric power, the town boasts the second lowest electric rate in Vermont. E. M. and John Brown, whose Blue Seal Feeds distribution service was bought by David Hathaway, pose with other employees at the triangle in the center of town. While Barton children often plan to leave town as soon as they finish school, usually to find better-paying jobs, a portion of the town's citizenry has moved to Barton to retire.

grow right into the farm, young people tend to leave to look for more opportunities. The rail system is a possible trump card for our future."

An open elevator stops at six floors in the freshly painted grey and blue E. M. Brown & Son building, a remarkable farm and building supply store. The *Orleans County Monitor,* in its Barton Centennial issue dated November 30, 1896, describes the former gristmill as containing "the best modern machinery and elevators, with a storage capacity of 5,000 bushels." Today the elevator doesn't look modern; it looks antique. Still, the E. M. Brown building represents prosperity and continuity, whereas so much else in that centennial newspaper is history, period.

E. M. "Mem" Brown, 71, steers his Lincoln into the garage attached to his brick ranch house overlooking Crystal Lake. The hills around the lake form a natural amphitheater, unblemished by over-development. "It's an odd lake," comments Mem, "because on one side the cliffs prevent development, and on the other the tracks of the Canadian Pacific skirt the shore preventing building."

Mem's father, F. C. Brown, bought the mill in 1920. "Farmers raised oats, barley, and corn then and brought them to us by horses to grind," says Mem. "Then they purchased bran, cottonseed meal, and linseed oil meal, and mixed it with their grain to feed their cows as a supplement to hay.

"In 1927 Dad took on a farmhouse from Wirthmore Feeds of St. Albans which eliminated the need for farmers to bring in their own grain. Wirthmore added molasses to these dry feeds. Molasses is important because it makes the grain much more palatable."

Later on, John Brown, Mem's son, working as a County Extension agent in Worcester, Massachusetts with a master's degree in agricultural economics, suggested the Browns market their own balanced dairy rations. "We bought a

second-hand grain mixer and a second-hand molasses blender," recalls Mem. "And we made our own electricity by water power. Six competing brands of feed disappeared from the market because they couldn't touch our prices."

Seated around an oil burner at Ernest Miller's plumbing shop in an old creamery building off Route 5 on a Wednesday afternoon are: Wayne Gray, manager of Barton's Community National Bank; Paul Doyle, local real estate broker; and Ernest Miller, plumbing and heating contractor.

Wayne Gray has faith in Barton; he just opened the second bank in town, "We did the leg work out of our main office in Derby eight or nine months ago, and at first we wanted nothing to do with it," he says. "But then we saw the activity and the potential activity, and positive attitude of the town. Crystal and Willoughby Lakes are fine attractions. In a few years we expect things to pick up considerably. Drop in and see us sometime."

Paul Doyle has faith in Barton. "We're in the most rural part of the state," he contends. "We have the most water; the area is called the Lake Region. Our real estate prices are the lowest. We're quite tourist oriented, but we also have good farm country, particularly from Barton on north. Some of the best farmers in the state live here.

"You try a little harder to keep busy in the Winter," he continues. "It's rewarding to sell property to people who come in and are a help to the community. If there's a problem in the future it may be because of Interstate 91. In 10 or 15 years we may see more development than we'd like. But we're zoned accordingly. Rural building lots are held to a three-acre minimum. They fetch $3,000 to $5,000. The most expensive land is lake frontage at up to $150 per foot."

Plumber Ernest Miller, a Newport native, left the Northeast Kingdom before World War II to work in Boston, Hartford, and New York. "I came back after the war, and it wasn't for the money!" he maintains. "I like the mountains and hills and ponds and lakes."

In the Winter he supports his company, which employs five men, including his son Gary. "We have plenty of work but it's not good work. It's patch work, service work — servicing oil burners. Good work is new work: construction. We just did the bank; we take care of both banks. We had a new home in Burke, a house for an artist. I like that: screwball jobs — I call them — because they're more interesting."

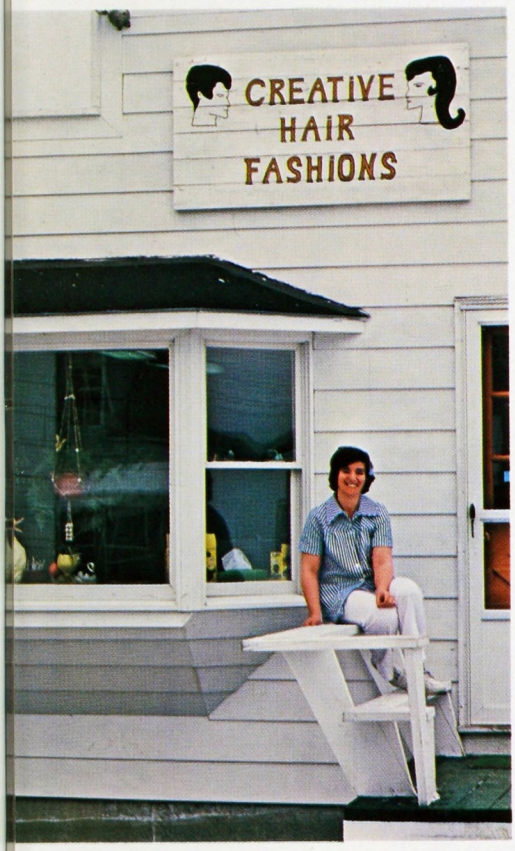
Are the women in Barton hiding? Not at all. There are three in Helen's Creative Hair Fashions, a beauty parlor on Park Street. If Bert the Barber's buddy — the Washington lawyer — had stopped here, he might have offered to buy Helen Fontaine's shop, too.

Barton, an old-fashioned town characterized by browns and greens and grays, two-day stubble, grease-stained faded blue jeans, manure-caked boots, railroad tracks, and rushing water, would be incomplete without a place like Helen's. The decor of her shop is spectacular: space-age modern. She designed it; her husband Gerard, a forklift operator at the Ethan Allen plant in Orleans, built it.

The ceiling is textured dry wall with a stucco effect, painted white and embedded with sparkles. White and gold linoleum embellishes the floor. Dazzling blue, green, and white wallpaper spans two walls. Green-grained wood panelling covers the other two. The cabinets are white and gold. Bright blues and greens jump out at you from the chairs, two of which are equipped with hair dryers.

Helen is dressed in white like a nurse.

Banker Wayne Gray, Broker Paul Doyle and Contractor Ernest Miller meet periodically at Miller's plumbing shop to discuss town affairs. They have faith in Barton as does Helen Fontaine, proprietress of the town's beauty salon.



She is administering a "blow dry" to Hazel Archambault, a stately retired woman, who participates in Barton's literary club, church and library activities, and politics.

"I've earned a good reputation in less than the three years I've been in business," states Helen. "Seventy percent of my customers are men. All haircuts cost $3.50. And you have to make an appointment to get one."

"The most valuable resource we have," says village trustee Ken Elliott, "is the people who live here." He's right about that. Their *raison d'être* now that the boom times are gone is survival, and it is an adventure, waiting for the next boom to come.

The Great Race at Breadloaf

Written and photographed by THOMAS M. JOHNSON

"WE THINK we're the only cross country ski race in America started with a shot from a black powder cannon," explained Col. Joe Whitehorne at last Winter's seventh annual Breadloaf Citizens' Race. It was held, as it has been every year, on the mountain campus of Middlebury College's Summer School of English. The citizens are serious skiers, but not professional racers. They include grade school girls and boys with their parents, flashy high school and college students, young marrieds, old timers in the graybeard division, and once, an infant circling the course on his daddy's back.

"We've got a great day," repeated Kristen McEdward, chairperson of the annual event. Proof was the record number of contestants — about 125 — and the large number of spectators.

"Ours was probably the only race in the East that got off the ground in 1980," mused Whitehorne, a retired U.S. Army colonel. "It was due to the nimbleness of our committee. The arrangements were all made between a Friday night storm in March and the Sunday race. The event had to be postponed in both January and February because of lack of you-know-what. Today is the best weather we've ever had. We've seen some fierce weather up here in the past for this race."

This year, skiers' vehicles kept arriving all morning in the plowed parking lot in front of The Barn where the ski shop is located. Jubilant occupants jumped from their cars and vans to unload ski equipment, backpacks, picnic baskets, and coolers.

At the busy registration desk, entrants paid two dollar fees. Because the trail-

use and entry fee were the same, just about every skier signed up to race. Names were put on a giant chart under divisions according to age and sex. Each one was issued a racer's bib on which his number and category were quickly enscribed with a felt-tip pen.

Next came the waxing of the skis, done inside the warming shed or outside against the sides of buildings and cars. It was a day for blue wax or blue plus some purple. Then the skier ventured out to test the snows. The Middlebury College crew had prepared the trails and marked a six kilometer course that avoided some of the more treacherous areas in deference to the racers' varied abilities.

At about 11 o'clock, gray moustachioed Henry Palmer of Cornwall arrived with neighbor Austin Lambeth hauling Henry's home-made artillery piece on the back of his truck. The call went out for assistance, and several contestants helped unload the cannon and push it to centerfield. Some of the younger skiers forgot their warm-ups to watch Henry pack the cannon with black powder and tamp it in with a ramrod. At 11:45 the last contestant was signed in. Henry fired off a round to close the registration.

Col. Whitehorne, who had been bustling about all morning as a jack-of-all-situations, called the contestants to the starting line. It was located at the lower end of the big field back of the Breadloaf dormitories, once the wooden cottages of the 19th century Battell mountain resort.

"Speed demons to the left, intrepids next, and bird watchers to the right," came the call over the bull horn. "All ski tips behind the starting line. Give way on the course to the call of 'Track!' You'll circle the field once and head into the woods between that blue flag and that birch tree there."

Racers nervously swished their skis back and forth. At noon, the cannon roared and they were off. The open field allowed the long line of starters ample room to be urged on by supporters and to funnel out with the fastest skiers in the lead.

Following the trail called "Turkey Trot," the course wound down through evergreen and deciduous forest decked with glistening snow. Then it doubled back to the campus and took a longer loop called "Timberline," equally beautiful. The finish, back on the campus below the judges' windows in The Barn, was marked by two flags connected by a line of blue detergent sprinkled in the snow.

But racers were not admiring the scenery. They dug in. The two lanes were well worn by the time the last had passed. The course was a bit slow, according to some, because of the varying conditions — fine and powdery in most places and a bit sticky where the warm January sun had filtered through. But the overall winner, Tim Kelly, finished in just under 20 minutes.

With the crack of the traditional cannon's starting signal, hundreds of skiers take off on the annual Breadloaf race. Below, a young contestant and perennial gray beard division winner, State Sen. Arthur Gibb.

His finish was cheered, but so was everyone else's. All the youngsters were given good hands. The applause increased for the later arrivals because earlier finishers stayed around to cheer them in.

Warming noses and hands over hot cups of fruit punch called "pep juice," which was supplied by the committee, contestants studied the chart posted on an outside wall of the warming hut. Volunteer officials updated the results frequently.

When all who had started reported at the finish line, there was an awards ceremony. Ski hats, homemade loaves of bread, and T-shirts were awarded to winners. Boxes of Crackerjacks were given to all in the youngest division who finished the course. An emergency survival kit was presented to the last finisher.

The chart with everyone's time was then removed to be displayed in the Skihaus Mountain Shop window in downtown Middlebury.

Charcoal braziers had been set glowing some time before the race waiting for hot dogs and hamburgers to be consumed after the race. After lunch, many skiers returned to the trails to re-live the earlier excitement or to enjoy a relaxed tour.

The contestants frequently include repeaters from previous years. State Senator Arthur Gibb is the perennial winner of the gray beard division. Many of the younger set pace themselves each year against Dr. Wayne Peters, who brought many of them into the world. Col. Whitehorne even claims that descendants of dogs who scrounged hot dogs in the early years are carrying on the family tradition at the race.

The race is organized by a committee in Middlebury that is about as open as a committee can be. It welcomes anyone who wants to help. The committee has recently decided not to offer the expensive prizes of the early years because they were attracting professional skiers. "We want this to be a community affair and a family fun day," explained Col. Whitehorne.

"Each year some of the registration money is retained to seed next year's race," the colonel went on. "Any profit after that is donated to the Nordic Ski Club of Middlebury. The club is helping the town recreation committee build a 15 meter jump on the east side of Chipman Hill just outside the village. They want to encourage the area's young ski jumpers. One year we also had enough money to donate to the town library to buy books about skiing."

Because it doesn't stress the competitive, the Breadloaf Citizens' Race may never produce a gold medal winner for the U.S. Olympic team. But it does make for an exciting day anticipated by ski racers who race just for the fun of it. ∞

Coco Kallis lives her 'New England Song'

By Donna Fitch
Photographs by Richard Howard

IT'S A SUMMER CONCERT at Battery Park in Burlington. The lush grass of the park, interrupted only by people lounging, dogs frolicking and an outdoor theatre, stretches to the paved walk that edges the steep banks above Lake Champlain. Thunder showers are predicted and gray clouds settle over the lake and the New York Adirondacks beyond, hazy through the mist. Bluebird, the group that will be playing, doubts that the concert will happen. But they decide to chance it and go on stage anyway. It starts to sprinkle.

Coco Kallis and her husband, Paul Miller, are two of the most talented and popular singers, songwriters and musicians in Vermont. Along with Larry Miller, a farmer from Morrisville and no relation to Paul, they make up Bluebird. Coco and Paul are also a part of, and the originators of, Coco and The Lonesome Road Band. If you live in Vermont or anywhere else in New England, and possibly even Nashville, Tennessee, and don't know or haven't heard of Coco and The Lonesome Road Band . . . well, you're not in the majority of contemporary music fans.

"We like this lifestyle," says Coco Kallis. "How could we leave this? It's a wonderful life."

What is a woman from Maine who studied opera in Boston and a man from the Bronx who plays drums, rhythm and bass guitar, piano (and probably any instrument you put in his hands) doing in Vermont? The same thing so many others are doing — loving every (well, *almost* every) minute of it. Coco's and Paul's feelings for Vermont border on reverence and those feelings could be just the reason why their followers can see them almost any week they want to and don't have to turn on the radio, put on an album, or go to a concert to hear them.

There's the possibility Coco and Paul could have made it very big in the music business. Their fans *know* they could have. In 1976 Coco and The Lonesome Road Band went to Nashville. There they recorded "New England Song," a song Coco wrote to express her love of New England and her feelings about the excellent musical talent in New England. As Coco writes in the song: "It's just as country as Dixie though the Winters sure seem long."

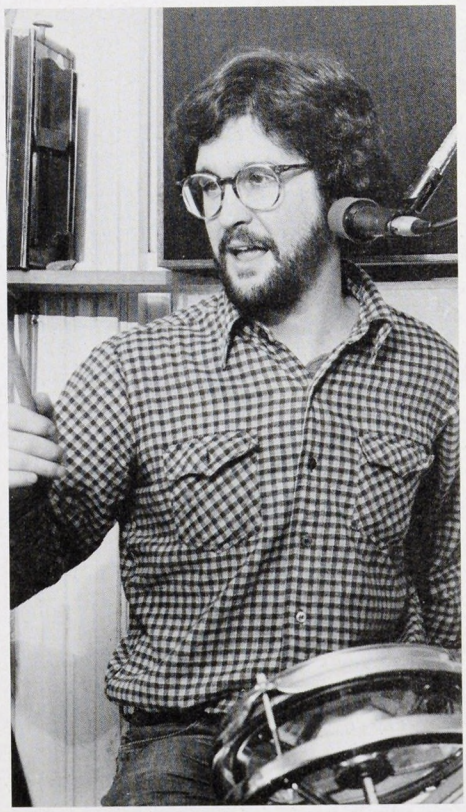
The song was a pick hit in *Billboard* and *Record World* magazine described it saying: "An excellent sound here and the sounds of a star on the rise." "New England Song" received national airplay and was especially popular in the northeast where it was on the charts for 11 weeks at WPOR, a popular country music station in Portland, Maine. It reached number three in the top 40 there and was number 21 overall for the year. Coco won the Songwriter of the Year award in the State of Maine Country Music Awards and the band was chosen Most Promising Band by the Eastern States Country Music Association.

During another trip to Nashville, Coco and Paul made a decision that was not easy to make. They decided to leave Vermont and move to Nashville: that capital of country music. They came back to Vermont, told their band they were leaving and prepared to move to Tennessee. At the last minute, they changed their minds. They just couldn't do it.

"We like this lifestyle. How could we leave this?" Coco looks around her, out the window. "It's a wonderful life. The beauty . . ." And like those of us who try to write about Vermont's beauty, she is at a loss for words. "We love Vermont," she says simply, her voice sounds reverent.

Maybe Coco and Paul sacrificed fame and fortune, but through their music they have been able to say thanks for what they didn't sacrifice. That includes glistening ice crystals on a great expanse of unblemished snow so white it's almost blue, covering a field that is bright yellow with dandelions in the Spring and grazed upon by cows in the Summer; and the woods beyond that become variegated with the brilliant colors of Autumn; caring neighbors and adoring fans, too. Coco and Paul are two sensitive, humorous, articulate, musically talented individuals whose music has become an integral part of Vermont and of the lives of many Vermonters.

Coco began singing in church when she was six. "The first song I learned was 'Jesus Loves Me,' " she remembers. She sang in school, in operettas and began voice lessons at the age of 12. After high school she went to Boston where she sang folk music and studied opera. In 1970 she was in the musical "Hair" in Boston and she sang in a duo on Cape Cod. Then she decided she wanted to get



The music of Coco and Paul, says the author, has become a part of Vermont and of the lives of Vermonters.

away, to leave music, and she came to Vermont. She got away to Vermont but she left music for only six months. Then she met Paul.

Paul became involved in music when he was five and was in a neighborhood music class taught by an elderly woman who, he says, was really there to teach kids to love music. He started playing piano when he was six. He studied guitar and played standup bass in junior high school. He left music during high school and didn't get back into it until he came to Vermont. Then he met Coco.

They started as a duo in St. Johnsbury in 1972 and grew to be Coco and the Lonesome Road Band. In the band, Coco strums her flattop guitar while Paul drums. Stepping to the rhythm, she moves up to the microphone to sing. She doesn't sound like she's from Alfred, Maine which she is. More like Butcher, Holler. Her voice is clear and smooth and country.

Coco and the Lonesome Road Band plays to the widest possible audience and as musical tastes change, the band's style evolves.

Jack Donovan of WDEV Radio Vermont calls the band, "One of the foremost exponents of Vermont country music . . ." and ". . . some of the best country music the state has to offer. The Lonesome Road Band's musical blend stresses country, but also includes a variety of musical styles, with the highlight being the sensitive, original songs of Coco Kallis and Paul Miller . . . The Lonesome Road Band is a tight-knit group of professionals who play country music, or whatever you want to hear. Versatility is the name of their game. . . . It's Vermont country at its finest." This past Fall the band's first album was released, recorded by Green Mountain Records of Northfield, Vermont.

Through changes in band members and through the changing musical tastes of their audience, Coco and The Lonesome Road Band continues to evolve musically. Recently they have considered themselves primarily a dance band playing rock and roll *and* country music. But there is a surprise in store for their fans.

While The Lonesome Road Band has made a conscious choice to respond to the desires of their audience, Bluebird has been where Coco's and Paul's hearts and souls lie, where their own personal music — their songs and their love of harmony — has its main outlet. In Bluebird with Larry Miller, whose voice Paul cannot stop talking enthusiastically about, their voices actually become musical instruments and can be heard in that way. Coco plays bass guitar and Paul plays lead, but harmony is their specialty and their voices are the essence of Bluebird. Now, Larry has decided to join The Lonesome Road Band, a development that will undeniably prove to be as rewarding and as exciting to listeners as it is to Coco and Paul.

Probably one of the most interesting aspects of The Lonesome Road Band is the widespread audience they appeal to. There is something in their music that attracts every age group. That something can be partially attributed to their ability to play everything from "Wipeout" to the "Wabash Cannonball" in one set and their sensitivity to the desires of their audience, not only to widespread national changes in musical tastes but the differences they encounter from one place to the next — from street dances to bars to weddings. That sensitivity and flexibility are reasons why the band has remained as popular and as admired as it was when it first started.

Coco and Paul's relationship, both personal and musical, is probably one of the main elements that has contributed to their success. They have a great respect for each other's talents which they don't hesitate to talk about and which is obvious when they appear on stage. Coco uses the word "magic" in relation to Paul and her working together, particularly their song writing — that moment when they both experience the same feeling and are able to capture it in words and music written together. As writers they are also able to compose their own songs and to be a helper to the other.

When they were asked to play for the 35th wedding anniversary of a couple from St. Albans who have been fans of theirs for years, they wanted to give them a present in thanks for their support. What better present, they decided, then to compose a song in their honor. Coco came up with the first half of the opening line, Paul the second half. Paul worked on the song and Coco reworked it filling in where he'd had problems. The song which they sang at the anniversary party was entitled "This Is Our Night" and the couple's tears proved they were deeply touched.

At Battery Park, Coco, Paul and Larry continue to play, eyes heavenward, watching the clouds drip. Suddenly, the clouds disperse, a double rainbow forms over the lake and the late afternoon sun anoints the crowd and the band in a purple light. Unplanned, they begin to play the song, "It's Darkest Before the Dawn," and as they sing the first line, "The sun is sinking. . . .," the sun makes its final dip and disappears behind the mountains. The crowd responds with a standing ovation. For the band it is an almost mystical experience and one they will never forget. Later, someone asks them, "Who does your light show? God?"

It is the kind of question that almost answers itself. ∞

Newport's Slalom Skiwear

By DAVID R. YOUNG
Photographs by CAROLYN BATES

EVERY WORKING MORNING in Newport, 150 people converge on an old, handsome building overlooking Lake Memphremagog. Eight years ago a sign reading "Orleans County Memorial Hospital" stood out front of the building, but that sign is gone now. Inside, the walls are white, but the hospital look ends there.

Bright red, green, and yellow gingham checked curtains hang side by side along rows of sun-filled windows. The rooms brim with life and color: hanging plants and clumps of large spools of brilliant red, yellow, green, and blue thread. There are lots of tall, white-slatted carts filled with pieces of fabric in the same vivid colors.

As the rooms fill with people, a quiet buzzing starts and skilled fingers perform an efficient choreography that creates finished products for Slalom Skiwear, Incorporated.

It seems fitting now that a major ski clothing manufacturer is located in Vermont, but Slalom has roots dating back to days long before skiing became popular. Its history really begins in 1850 when the Connecticut and Passumpsic Railroad first laid track into Newport. By 1886, the city was a major junction in the rail network linking the United States and Canada. This inspired Benjamin Franklin Moore, of nearby Morgan, to form the B. F. Moore Company in 1891 to manufacture "Newport" overalls for railroad workers. Within several years Moore's brother joined the company and it moved into a former Newport tannery, which was expanded with the addition of two stories to the building.

Thus is the tie that binds. Frank Hamilton, current treasurer of Slalom, is Moore's brother's great grandson, and the tannery today remains an integral part of the skiwear company business, storing finished goods before they are shipped for sale.

The path was not easy, however. In the late 1920s the Moore's "Newport" overall business needed a supplement and a suggestion was made to introduce ski clothing. Frank's grandmother chose the brand name "Slalom" and the new industry was launched. Thanks to military uniform contracts and a slowly growing market for skiwear, the B. F. Moore company survived — but barely. By 1968 there were only 20 employees, working only a part of the year. Sales were under a quarter of a million dollars a year when the company was finally sold to Profile Ski Wear.

Frank Hamilton left graduate studies at the University of Colorado and was hired by Profile to head manufacturing at the Newport business, essentially replacing his grandfather, Porter Moore, as the "inside" person. Al Diem was brought in as President and "outside" person, replacing Frank's uncle, with hopes he would spearhead a marketing expansion. The descriptions were accurate. Born in Switzerland, Al was skiing by the time he was four and still retains a trace of accent. Frank, in contrast, had grown up in the Newport business by working Summers there, ten of them. "I literally started at the bottom," he says. "Operators had to move so I could sweep under their machines."

Then in February 1971, Steve Crisafulli, an executive with Profile, arranged with Al and Frank to buy B. F. Moore Com-

Owners of Slalom/Sea Gear, left to right, are Frank Hamilton, Al Diem and Steve Crisafulli.

pany from Profile. They formed a new corporation, Slalom Skiwear, Incorporated, with Steve as President, Al as Executive Vice President, and Frank as Treasurer. This trio was about to show that it could prosper and grow in a very competitive business.

By 1975 Slalom was ready to broaden its base. When International Marine came to Slalom to see about having a floatation jacket manufactured there, it wound up a subsidiary of the Newport Company. "Sea Gear" was chosen as the brand name and, later, the company name. It has proven so successful that for the past two years Sea Gear has been the official supplier of foul weather gear to the United States America's Cup crews. Today, when Gary Gobson, who serves as tactician for Ted Turner on *Courageous* and consultant to Sea Gear, says he's going to Newport he needs to add whether that's Rhode Island or Vermont.

As Slalom has expanded, it has taken over more and more of Newport. In addition to the original tannery, the company now occupies the top two floors of a building along Main St., a leased metal building, and, of course, the hospital. The latter is a large building whose cornerstone was laid July 31, 1922. Home of the Orleans County Memorial Hospital, it opened with 24 beds and served the area for 52 years until it was replaced by a newer facility.

Newport's loss was Slalom's gain, however. The following year Slalom bought the vacant building and Steve was able to indulge his architectural fantasies by designing the renovation. In 1976, the three story building once again opened for business, this time as the home of Slalom Skiwear. Today, Slalom's administrative offices occupy the first floor and Frank can point and say, with a gleam in his eye, "My son, Reed, was born in the Customer Service office over there."

Despite the competitiveness of the clothing industry, which, Steve says, allows anyone with "a connection and a plane ticket to Hong Kong" to enter the business, Slalom is committed to these personal touches. According to him: "The factory environment here is better than most offices." Thousands of garment workers across the nation probably wouldn't believe that, but Art Steiner isn't one of them. Steiner, a 25 year veteran pattern maker and a native New Yorker, came to Slalom in 1975. Seven years later he is equally enthusiastic about Slalom, pattern making, and lake fishing.

Grace Galdi and Bonnie Van Schiver are also believers. "The company is exciting and growing," Grace says, although

Designers Bonnie Van Schiver and Grace Galdi and Seamstress Julie Lussier help create products that are high quality and highly popular.

she has been with Slalom only a couple of years. "Communication is exceptional. This job is my whole life. It's what I really wanted to do."

She and Bonnie make up the company's design group, working side by side on the third floor with the best view of the lake. As designers, however, they are more concerned with the future than the view. They will have finished the 1982-83 line in time to have samples at the March annual Ski Industry of America Ski Show in Las Vegas. After catching their breaths, they will start designing the 1983-84 line.

The Slalom theme is function and continuity. Fads are avoided, as is the designer look. According to Steve, "We're trying to sell skiwear to skiers, not pseudo skiwear to people who want to look like skiers. We want to be able to ski at Stowe in January."

Attention to quality and detail pervades the company. Throughout, Slalom has the highest quality machinery and

Once the local hospital, this handsome brick building is now headquarters of Slalom/Sea Gear. Below, models pose in the latest line of sportswear made by the company.

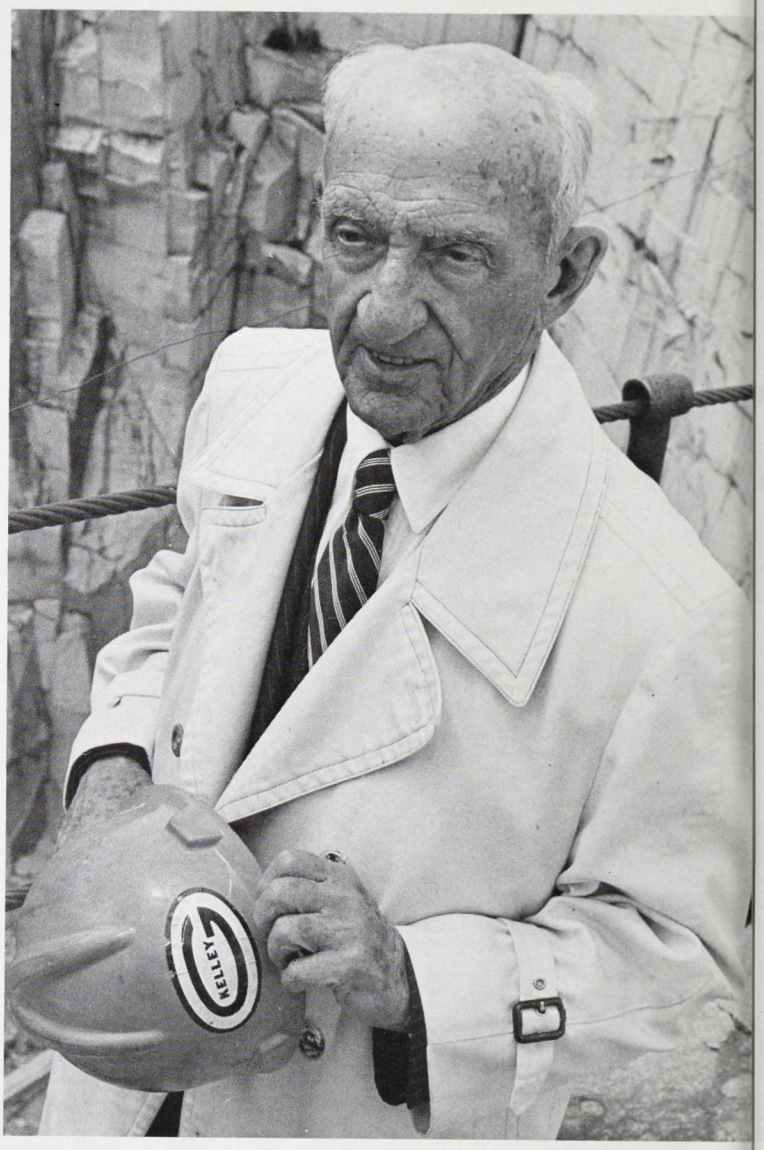
innovative equipment, from the down floating machine in the basement to the quietly humming programmable sewing machines made in West Germany. Furthermore, workers are paid on a piece rate to assure speed, although they are not paid for rejects, to emphasize quality. Finally, each garment is inspected before it is shipped.

Slalom pays relatively high wages, uses quality materials, and insists on a top quality product. This adds up to high prices, but customers all over the world recognize value. Sales have grown from under a quarter of a million dollars in 1968 to ten million dollars last year.

What started as a local family overalls business has evolved over the past near century into a fast-growing, energetic ski and sea wear company with world-wide sales. Moreover, Slalom, Inc. has now preserved a landmark building in Newport, converted the hospital incinerator for wood heat, organized four van pools, and encouraged a Vermont lifestyle.

MAURICE KELLEY:

The Grand Young Man of Granite



By ARTHUR RISTAU
Photographs by HANSON CARROLL

FOUR HUNDRED FEET below the rims of Barre's immense granite deposits, the quarrymen are noisily contesting the smooth, solemn stone for the space where it has rested undisturbed for millions of years. There is no harder work but it is said that the special men who do it are truly at home nowhere else.

Up on the bank, Maurice Kelley, 87 going on 39, surveys his 40 acre domain like a Texan contemplating a field full of oil wells. An elfin sprite of five feet, he is dwarfed by the ponderous blocks of gray granite which surround him like sentinels.

They have now begun a journey that will see them artfully transformed into memorials, statuary and building blocks. For Kelley too, the journey continues.

"Kel" has, in the local parlance, "granite dust in his nose." Now, that nose is twitching like a fish bobber. "I knew it," he rasped, rapping his palm on a slab of granite. "I knew we'd be open again some day."

For 150 years the Wells-Lamson Quarry had been in business — the oldest quarry in continuous usage in the United States. In the Spring of 1980, however, after Kel had operated the quarry for more than 40 years, it was shut down. But that was last year and young men are not given to looking back. "Oh yes, I knew we'd reopen. No question about it."

Orton the derrickman interrupts his semaphoring to point to the 30-ton block he is carefully coaxing aloft. He waves to Kel and his deep laugh punctuates the ponderous grinding of the 40-foot crane he's directing. "There's Orton," Maurice laughed back. "He's on the job again. He's happy."

Happy too, is Maurice Kelley. He clambers atop one of the granite blocks, hand over hand. He looks out for miles over the Vermont hillside. He doesn't wear glasses and most of what he can see is all his. And he earned it himself.

The granite industry, always stable but never spectacular, is in the throes of a modest renaissance. It was virtually unscathed by the economic uncertainties of the late 1970s and seems to be spurting into the new decade propelled by such diverse circumstances as the energy crisis and an awakened interest in memorialization.

Kelley is the industry's transitional personality. His 65 year affair with granite has, for example, transcended from the hand operated manual gang saw to the fully automated diamond saw which rips through the sapphire hard stone 20 times faster. He has seen Vermont change, too.

"I was born in a tenement over the railroad station in East Fletcher. We didn't have any running water, of course. My dad was the station master there but he was into a lot of other things, too."

Some of the other things which preoccupied James Michael

Kelley included farm feed, real estate and Christmas trees. The elder Kelley was orphaned as a youth in London and emigrated alone to Quebec where, at St. Armand, he learned telegraphy. He came to Fletcher to practice his new trade for the old St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County Railroad.

"It was there he married my mother, Jim Patch's daughter, Addie. In 1900 they moved to Morrisville where I grew up."

Growing up in Morrisville meant attending People's Academy where centerfielder Kelley was nimble enough to win an athletic scholarship to Dean Academy in Franklin, Mass. Then it was on to his beloved University of Vermont.

In a freshman chemistry class at UVM, he made the friendships about which he loves to reminisce. His chums were Robert F. Joyce, now retired after many years as the popular bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Vermont and the late Lou Little whose Columbia University football team was the last from the East to win the Rose Bowl.

"It was one of those alphabetical accidents, you know. J - K - L — Joyce, Kelley, Little. The funny thing is, Little wasn't his real name. And nobody called Bob Joyce anything but 'Pat.' Joe Johnson, an upperclassman, (who later became governor) gave him that nickname."

Bishop Joyce remembers it well. "Maurice Kelley came into my life and the lives of thousands of the UVM family when we met as freshman members of the Class of 1917. He was elected our class president and he has been the sparkplug of the class ever since.

"When I was named Bishop in 1954, Maurice somehow learned of it and it was he who made the first public announcement at the Barre Rotary Club."

Those present attest that it was done in characteristic Kelley style. "Things are okay in the Catholic Church," the Episcopalian Kelley disclosed. "Pat Joyce has just been named Bishop."

Kelley himself wanted to be a doctor but instead established a granite brokerage firm in Indianapolis. During his travels he met and subsequently married Martha Daniel of Cincinnati. In 1934 he returned to Vermont with his wife and sons Maurice L. Kelley, Jr. and James Michael Kelley, II. Maurice Jr. is a physician in Hanover — "one of the best gastroenterologists in the country" — insists his dad. James Michael, a repatriated stockbroker, returned from Boston a few years ago to join the family firm. Maurice and Martha have lived in Montpelier for many years.

"Buying, developing, selling businesses. That's what I've always done and what I still enjoy." These included the Kelley Construction Co., the By-Products Division of Jones and Lamson, eventual ownership of the Jones Brothers granite manufacturing company and president of Welco, Inc., a supply company.

One of his earliest business and personal associates was Deane C. Davis, retired executive, governor and now a chronicler of Vermontiana.

"Maurice," says Davis, "is one of those genial, smiling outgoing types of persons who has a smile that just comes to life. When you're with him you feel great and you know the world's a pretty good place after all. He was always a great Rotarian and he takes seriously their motto 'Service Above Self.' He's one of the truly interesting Vermonters I've ever known and he's had a tremendous civic and business impact on the Central Vermont area."

Kelley's enthusiasm is most evident when he talks about the granite industry. "The granite business is terrific. The demand for monumental and construction stone has never been better." The rising cost of all forms of heating and its long-term low maintenance features are the principal reasons for granite's resurgence as a construction material. The stone has thermal properties that make it extremely efficient. It does not retain either heat or cold for long periods of time. Dimensional granite now accounts for almost 10 percent of the $50 million annual output of the Greater Barre area. Five years ago such sales were insignificant.

"It has a great future," says Kelley. "I'm convinced that someday granite by-products are going to be even more valuable than the stone itself."

With a practiced shoulder shrug he's back inside the jacket of his natty, pin stripe, three-piece suit. He scoops up a shapeless Irish linen hat, setting it atop his bald head at a rakish angle. Shoulders hunched, blue eyes dancing, he looks like a leprechaun out to make some mischief.

"I'm going up to the quarry. You guys coming?"

Kelley is first, a man of granite. But he has also served as head of a major fund raising drive on the UVM Board of Trustees and as a member of the Council of Economic Advisors for former Governor Philip H. Hoff.

Quaint, Quiet… Quechee Inn

By Paul Robbins
Photographs by Ava Emerson

George Perkins Marsh, a distinguished scholar and diplomat from Woodstock who is widely regarded as the father of the American conservation movement, once groused about Vermont's "rude climate that gives us three Winters each year — two Southern with Siberia intercalated between."

He hated Green Mountain Winter so much, in fact, that when Abraham Lincoln asked him to be the first U.S. minister to the newly formed Republic of Italy in 1861, he immediately accepted and proceeded to spend the last 20 years of his life in that country. It was there, far from this allegedly "rude climate," that he finished writing *Man and Nature,* published in 1864 and considered by many as the cornerstone of ecological concern in this country.

But perhaps ol' G.P. wouldn't mind Winter so much these days if he could spend it back at the original family homestead in Quechee. It's called the Quechee Inn at Marshland Farm now and is a slightly expanded version of the two-story frame home which his grandfather built on a right-turn of the Ottauquechee River in 1793.

The wideboard floors remain as part of

the Early American decor. Most rooms have their fireplace, all have quilts and braid rugs to go with the antiques. The lounge, where everyone can enjoy hot, mulled cider at the end of a crisp or biting winter day, is a converted carriage house. Innkeepers Barbara and Mike Yaroschuk added a dining room and a handful of guest rooms upstairs two years ago, but you couldn't detect the new construction unless it was pointed out, everything is so much in keeping with the original construction.

Hospitality and history ooze from almost every crack and pore in the colonial style inn. The Marsh family was one of the most prominent in the early days of this fledgling state and Marshland had an integral role. Joseph and Dorothy Marsh had twelve children and their grandchildren included the aforementioned George Perkins Marsh, who went bankrupt in business but cashed in on the diplomatic and academic fronts, as well as James Marsh, who is credited with strengthening the University of Vermont during his presidency (1826-33).

Joseph Marsh was a veteran of the French and Indian War who came to the unsettled lands along the Connecticut River from Connecticut in 1772. In 1776, local delegates to the Provincial Congress of New York elected him governor of the proposed state of Vermont and a year later he was in on the writing of the State Constitution. The following year, 1778, he was elected the first lieutenant governor of the newly independent state of Vermont, serving four terms before stepping down to become a county judge. In 1793, having floated doors, windows and beams for the frame up the Connecticut on rafts, Marsh built his home on land where the Ottauquechee veers sharply and heads through Quechee Gorge, a snowball's throw away, before it empties into the Connecticut River. The home was so splashy compared to other homes in those early days of independence that locals took to calling it the "Baronial Mansion." (One of his sons, Charles, built what has become known as the Billings Estate in Woodstock, a handsome red brick structure on a knoll above another bend in the Ottauquechee. This was where George P. Marsh was born.)

Only two families owned Marshland for more than a century and a half — the Marshes and, from 1846 until the late 1950s, the Porters. When the Army Corps of Engineers decided to build Hartland Dam in 1958, a few miles downstream from Marshland, the land in the area was threatened. The farm site was spared when the dam did not force backflooding of lands above the gorge and the government finally agreed to sell Marshland on the stipulation it be moved to higher ground.

"Well, Logan Dickie, who lives up in Newbury now, bought the home and filled in this section of land near the river with pure topsoil. I mean, you just won't find any lawn like this anywhere," says Mike Yaroschuk, "because it's absolute topsoil, just the best, right out of the river bottom. So, then Logan moved the house, which had been — what? maybe a couple of hundred yards? — just down the road, he brought it up here with horses pulling the load and they brought up the barn and went back to work as a dairy farm."

Originally, the site had been an old lumber yard, he adds. The red barn with white trim helps the inn retain the farm look, as do the white fences which border the cornfields and corrals for the four horses — Whistlebait, Fledermaus, Happy Days and Barbara's Arabian, Jonathan.

So much for history, which is an almost impersonal aspect of what is an anything-but-impersonal inn. Such a cold chronology cannot accurately capture the warmth of the inn, the friendliness that crackles like the well-dried maple logs which dance with flames in

Barbara and Mike Yaroschuk, owners of the Quechee Inn (standing) chat with guests over breakfast. "We try to look at it as if our guests and our staff are all part of an extended family," Mike says.

the living room fireplace from foliage through mud season.

The 22 room inn is as warm and comfortable as that old, sagging sweater with the hole at the elbow. It's a genuine mixture of postcard quaintness, library quiet and yet genuine friendliness. And it's not always so quiet or undisturbed — not with Governor Marsh, the gregarious golden retriever, lumbering into a room or collapsing in the front hall (when he doesn't curl up under the front desk).

In a way, it's completely surprising. If there's a homey feeling, it's because the inn is not merely an extension of the Yaroschuks' home, it *is* their home. They live and breathe here. Their lives swirl around it, all of which leads to the personal environment. It makes the Quechee Inn more of a home, less of a room factory for guests.

"We try to look at it as if our guests and our staff are all part of an extended family," Mike says. "That can have its drawbacks, of course, but it's usually a pretty good feeling for everyone. We're small enough so everyone can get to know everyone else if they want to. . . ."

At the same time, there is no boarding house manner to the manor. It's not a one-sitting meal with everyone around the same table, potatoes down and pass the butter, please. A light breakfast — cereals, warm rolls or muffins and something to drink — starts the day, guests are on their own for lunch and then candlelight dinner is available with reserved seatings, starting at 6 o'clock.

Chef Ken Thompson is the maestro in the kitchen, dishing out a symphony of succulent beef, fowl or seafood. The cuisine is so exquisite, in fact, it attracts many area residents, not just the foliage followers or inn guests.

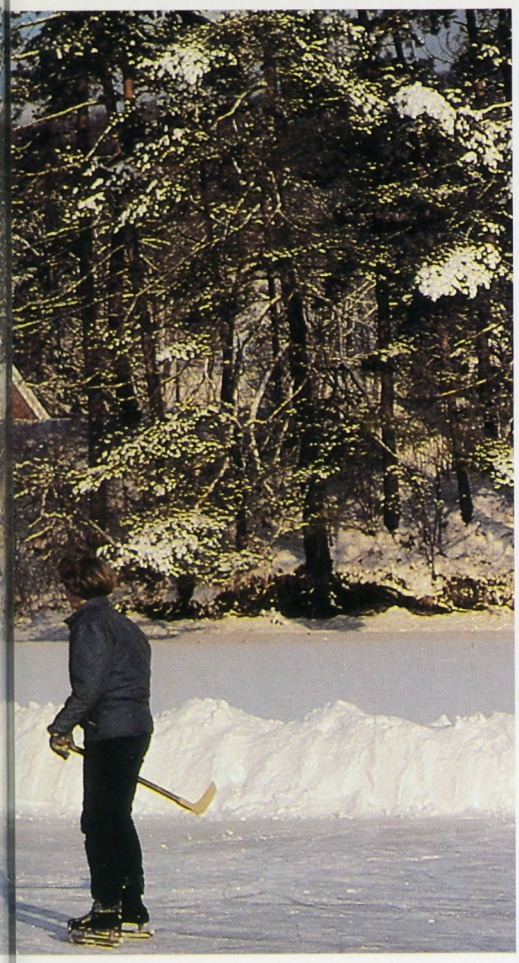
Mermaid's Blessing, for instance, wraps five wafer-thin layers of filo strudel dough (each separated by ground cracker crumbs) around a steaming mix of King Crabmeat, cheddar cheese, blanched cauliflower and a dollop of sour cream plus herbs and spices. The presentation of the fan-shaped rack of lamb is second only to the tasty morsels of each chop and the medallions of veal are so tender you almost need a second bite to make sure they're not marshmallow.

Hyperbole? Well, maybe, but the simple fact is Ken Thompson sets out a mighty pleasing menu.

While Summertime activities pretty well take care of themselves, the inn has lined up a couple of things to do in Winter, from something as simple and pleasant as walking along the ice-covered river or photographing the scenic surroundings tramping out on snowshoes with Mike, ice skating with the kids — or cross-country skiing. Or maybe feeding hay to the horses.

Part of the barn is used as a small warming hut for the cross-country set and the inn can arrange for lessons or equipment rentals. Tracked trails are not set but the terrain is gentle enough — mostly the flats along the river or back across the cornfield, that the first skier out breaks the trail and everyone who follows helps flatten the track.

The life of an innkeeper is a 180-degree spin from what the Yaroschuks had been used to in their suburban Washington, D.C., lifestyle. Mike, a former hockey player from Boston College who went to Georgetown Law School, was a successful lawyer in the nation's capital while Barbara was a former teacher from Illinois who was actively involved in several community projects. And raising three youngsters kept both of them busy, too. But, still, they were restless.



Chris Yaroschuk, daughter of the Inn's owners, has the early morning chore of feeding her horse. Later in the day, she might join others in a pick-up hockey game on the frozen lake in front of the Inn, or join Tom Linell, the staff ski instructor, on the cross country trails.

"We didn't know what we wanted, but we knew we wanted something else," Barbara recalls. "Well, on a visit to Mike's mother in Boston, this was the spring of 1978, we saw an ad in The Wall Street Journal for an inn in Vermont. We figured as long as we were this close, we'd take a look. It wasn't what we wanted at all, but we wound up spending the night here in Quechee. Now, this was what we would have liked, we thought as soon as we came through the door. As it turned out, the Quechee Lakes Corp., which had run it as an inn for a year or two, had just decided to put it up for sale. We took it."

Eighteen months later, they completed the dining room and half-dozen guest rooms above it. Now they're remodeling the old dairy barn for their own living quarters, and are hopeful of moving in by Easter.

"Running an inn is pretty much like running your own home," Mike says, looking up from a list of chores to be done. "There's always something that has to be done, but that's good because it shows there's some life, some feeling, something going on. When we haven't got anything left to do, that's when we'll be in trouble."

Something Very Special in Smugglers' Notch and Stowe

By Phyllis Bell
Photographs by Paul O. Boisvert

A Special Olympics athlete is out of the starting gate (above) in a quest for a medal, or at least the satisfaction of participating. Above, the torch is lit, signifying the official start of the games. Medals were awarded at the conclusion.

'Let me win,
But if I cannot win,
Let me be brave in the attempt.'

THIS IS THE OATH, the motto, and the prayer of the many hundreds of thousands of retarded children and adults who participate in the Special Olympics programs. Last March, the second international Winter games were held at The Village at Smugglers' Notch and Stowe, Vermont.

The fact that two tiny Vermont villages acquired such an event seems highly unlikely but its inception was almost casual. Bob Noel, the director of Vermont Special Olympics, came to the Stowe Area Association and asked members if they were interested in hosting the games. Officials at Smugglers' Notch, which has ideal accommodations for the participants, were also asked if they would take part. Everyone agreed readily. Everyone envisioned a few kids skiing through a few gates. "Only one day of competition? No problem, we do it all the time." Everyone was wrong.

A bid was entered and approved by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, the Special Olympics founder and sponsor, and all of us who were to become so very involved in this extraordinary event became committed. Before it was over, we were almost overwhelmed.

Stowe and Jeffersonville (the hometown of Smugglers' Notch) are close neighbors on Rte. 108, but Winter closes the Notch and those of us on the other side of the mountain tend to lose contact. But last Winter, our combined populations, about 4,000 people, stayed very close. Our considerable volunteer efforts kept us that way.

First of all, money had to be raised. The Kennedy Foundation's contribution was large, but it couldn't cover everything. The transportation of teams from 47 states and three foreign countries was arranged and local transport hired. Handbooks, programs, posters, and publicity were designed and printed. Fund-raising events were held all over the state: from skate-a-thons, benefit performances, to a basketball game (locals vs the New England Patriots professional football players).

The housing for the various teams had to be apportioned at The Village at Smugglers' Notch. The Village was closed to others, ensuring great freedom and safety for the athletes. Each contingent was given one or more adjacent condominium units, complete with larders stocked and beds made by local women's clubs. Each condominium was assigned a well-briefed, volunteer Olympic host, responsible for the welfare of its occupants. In addition, the team coaches had to be accommodated with their athletes, as well as many proud parents who attended the games.

The general care and feeding of this large and diverse group was no simple matter. An emergency medical resource team with a fully equipped clinic was formed and staffed. The many celebrities, representatives of the firms who donated to Special Olympics and stars of cinema, television and the sports world all needed greeting, housing, and detailing of their responsibilities.

Clinics for teaching the various disciplines were organized with a one-on-one instructor for each athlete, a senior instructor for each level, and a group leader for each event.

The distribution of large amounts of clothing and equipment — boots from Nordics, skis and poles from Rosignol, bindings from Salomon (all needing individual adjustment), skates from Micron, Special Olympic hats from Stowe Woolen Weavers, and team ski suits from Beconta — was programmed to occur at Essex Junction High School, when the teams were en route between Burlington airport and Jeffersonville.

When the teams finally arrived, all equipped and outfitted in their matching suits, every volunteer effort became a sheer joy. Groups of happy people roamed around the Village, absolutely wide-eyed. Many had never even seen snow before and had only two days to learn or polish their skills. Some competitors had qualified in regional games, but others had only dry-land training for conditioning. All athletes were ultimately grouped by ability, so that all had a chance to compete and succeed.

For reasons never made abundantly clear, the responsibility of arranging for an opening ceremony for the games fell to me. I was not a logical choice, given the fact that I had never booked bagpipes, or a Dixieland or marching band or a fife and drum corps, or pigeons; never called upon important people to speak or perform; never built and decorated an Olympic torch platform or a reviewing stand; never ordered fireworks legally. But somehow it all came together in a joyous parade of athletes winding

Gold medal winner Julie Wenting (above) displays her trophy while ski professional, Billy Kidd, gives out autographs. Below, the Beaver, mascot of sponsoring Champlain College, entertains some young athletes.

through the Village; each contingent with its banners and one or more of the many celebrities as an escort. The flags went up, the invocation was given by Bishop John Marshall, everyone sang "Edelweiss" with Elizabeth von Trapp, brief remarks were made by Governor Richard Snelling, Dr. Skiff of Champlain College and Eunice Kennedy Shriver. The Special Olympics oath was recited by Rafer Johnson and a Vermont Special Olympian. Frank Gifford announced the arrival of the Olympic flame and Billy Kidd, a professional skier and familiar figure to all in his black cowboy hat, handed it to two other Vermont athletes. They skied down with an escort of U.S. and Canadian Olympians to light the Special Olympic torch. A thousand balloons flew, Senator Edward Kennedy declared the games to be open, and — to almost everyone's total surprise — it all ran exactly on schedule.

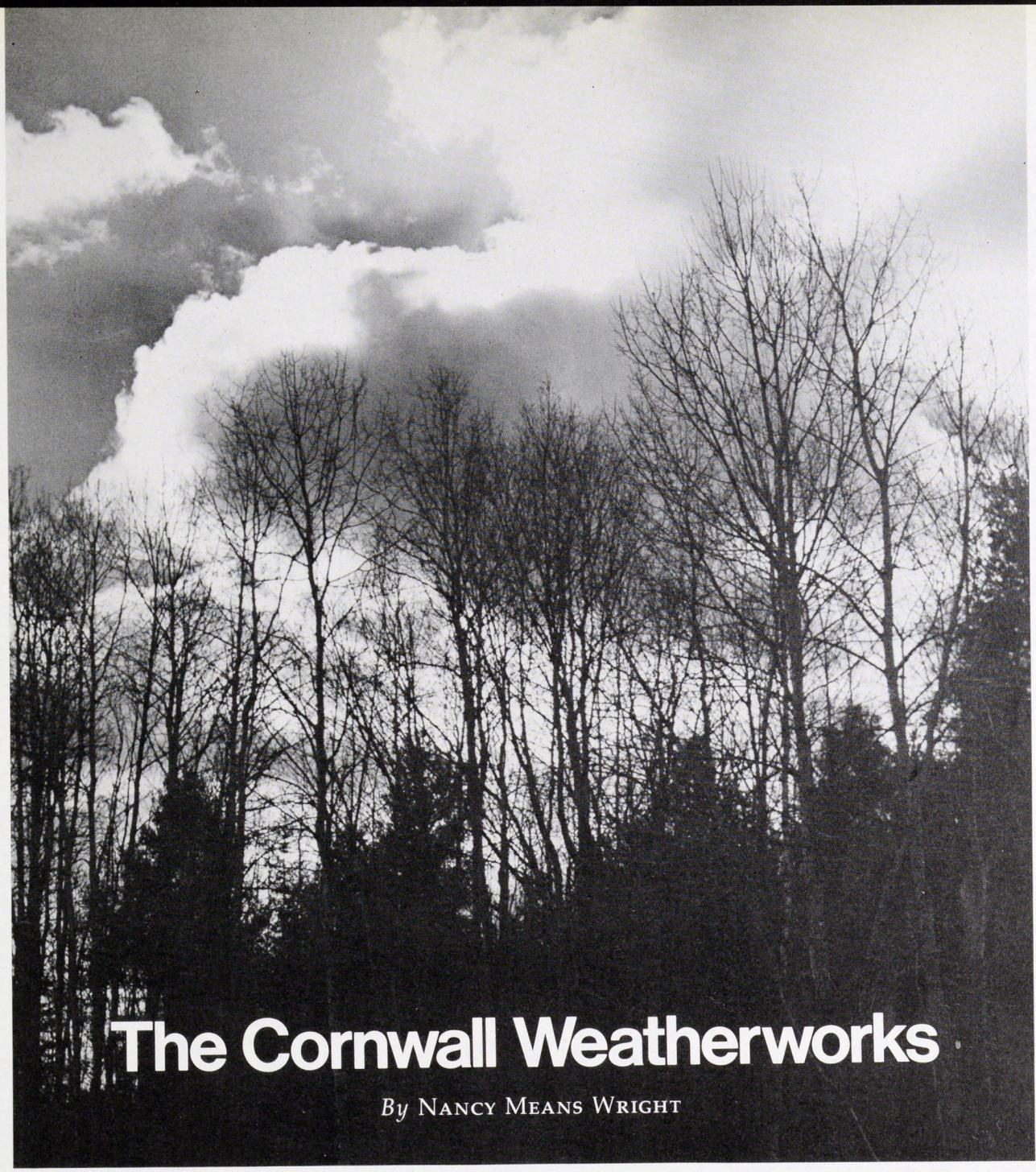
When darkness fell, the bagpipes again piped the athletes out to see a torchlight parade down the mountain and fireworks which we all viewed in a light snowfall. Olympian speed skater Eric Heiden fulfilled a secret ambition: he went up the hill and asked to help the fireworks crew. Why not? Everyone was given a glow-lite to light his way home.

On competition day, luck was with us. After an almost total washout late in February, we received several small snowstorms, and with help from snowmaking Smugglers' Notch was able to run slalom and downhill races with no problems. The ice skating competition was moved to the Essex Recreational Center arena for better ice, and it was able to accommodate the large number of spectators who arrived. The cross country races ran beautifully at Stowe High School and the Trapp Family Touring Center, despite the tragic fire and loss of the main Lodge in December. The day was bright and sunny, the crowds enthusiastic, and the competitors an inspiration to all. The ability of some was very impressive, but the courage and determination of all were awesome. A three kilometer cross country race would intimidate most of us; they attacked it! All were moved by the figure skaters doing a complete routine all alone in that big arena, and the downhill and slalom finishes were spectacular.

Closing ceremonies were held in the morning of the last day of the games. We all held hands in "Olympic rings" and together sang, "It's a Small, Small World." The flags were lowered, the torch was extinguished, a flight of pigeons wheeled overhead, and we all cried a little.

But everything was not quite over. The competitors still had the afternoon to enjoy a Vermont Carnival, with sugar-on-snow, rides in sleighs drawn by Morgan horses, many games, and even a "petting zoo" full of baby animals. Also, another evening of entertainment awaited them before their departure on Friday morning.

The entire week was an absolute delight for both the contestants and the volunteers. Attending the International Special Olympics is a once-in-a-lifetime thrill for these special people. Their pride in this achievement was always evident and only equaled by our pride in being volunteers in their behalf.



The Cornwall Weatherworks

By NANCY MEANS WRIGHT

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL A. NEARY, JR.

HENRY LANE WAS UP in Montpelier at a State Board of Agriculture meeting one rainy day back in 1886 when it was announced that Washington had called for a volunteer weather observer from each county in Vermont. As the representative from Addison County, Lane raised his hand high. The list of amateur recorders, after all, included such illustrious weatherbuffs as Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, compulsive compilers of daily weather for most of their lives. A successful seed grower as well as Merino sheep farmer, Lane himself, as often as not, had one eye peeled on the sky. He, too, was a careful weather watcher.

The Washington Weather Bureau sent him a four-foot, high-low thermometer that would also serve as barometer, and precise instructions for its care and use in his back yard in Cornwall. The location, among low rolling hills, was ideal as far as Lane was concerned: a fertile valley between two bodies of water — Lake Dunmore to the southeast, and Lake Champlain to the west, with Otter Creek flowing nearby. To the east the Green Mountains rise upwards of 3,800 feet above sea level, and serve to check the fury of Winter coastal storms. The climate offered a wide range of temperatures both daily and annually, along with startling variations in the same seasons in different years. Lane was eager to begin.

He set up the instruments behind his house, free of obstructions as the Bureau advised. A family tradition of climatological recording was thus begun in Cornwall, Vermont, that according to the U.S. Weather Bureau today is one of the longest continuous records in the United States. It is unique, the Bureau states, in that "for the entire period, beginning in May, 1886, the same family has served as observer."

On Lane's death, the apparatus was passed across the street to his son Charles, a truck farmer; and then to the

latter's widow Sarah. Among the three they transcribed the weather for sixty-four years. From 1950 until 1980 Lane's great-grandson, Stuart Witherell, now retired county probate judge and apple grower turned town historian, maintained the daily log in his own yard, a mere mile from the site of Lane's first crude instrument.

Although the equipment grew more sophisticated over the years, the routine varied little. The Judge would go out each day at 5:30 p.m. to record the highs and lows, and measure any rainfall inside the metal gauge. As often as not there was some. Droughts are rare in Addison County, he notes. The record rainfall was on November 2-4, 1927 — 5.30 inches, "when Grandfather practically drowned trying to get from house to box."

In Winter, the Judge would let the gauge fill with snow, then measure the liquid equivalent indoors. His more recent charts record such prolonged periods of "weather" as thirty-seven inches of snow in 1969 between Christmas Eve Friday and the following Tuesday, and twenty straight days of snowfall in 1978. A normal Winter, according to the charts, would see the ground snow-covered for about two-and-a-half to three months, from mid-December until mid-March. In 1979 he recorded 16 consecutive days of below zero temperatures. In general, though, he observes, periods of bitter cold in his part of Vermont are short, and attended by light winds, which remove the sting of the cold.

Except for the war years, when charts were rushed out weekly along with comments on crop and farm conditions, the Judge would send his observations once a month to the National Records Office in Asheville, North Carolina, and file away the copies in a wooden box in his workshop. He still spends a good part of each day seated there at a desk piled high with weather bulletins, old photos and other memorabilia to be used for his Cornwall history-in-progress. Several framed certificates attest to his "faithful and accurate observation of the weather."

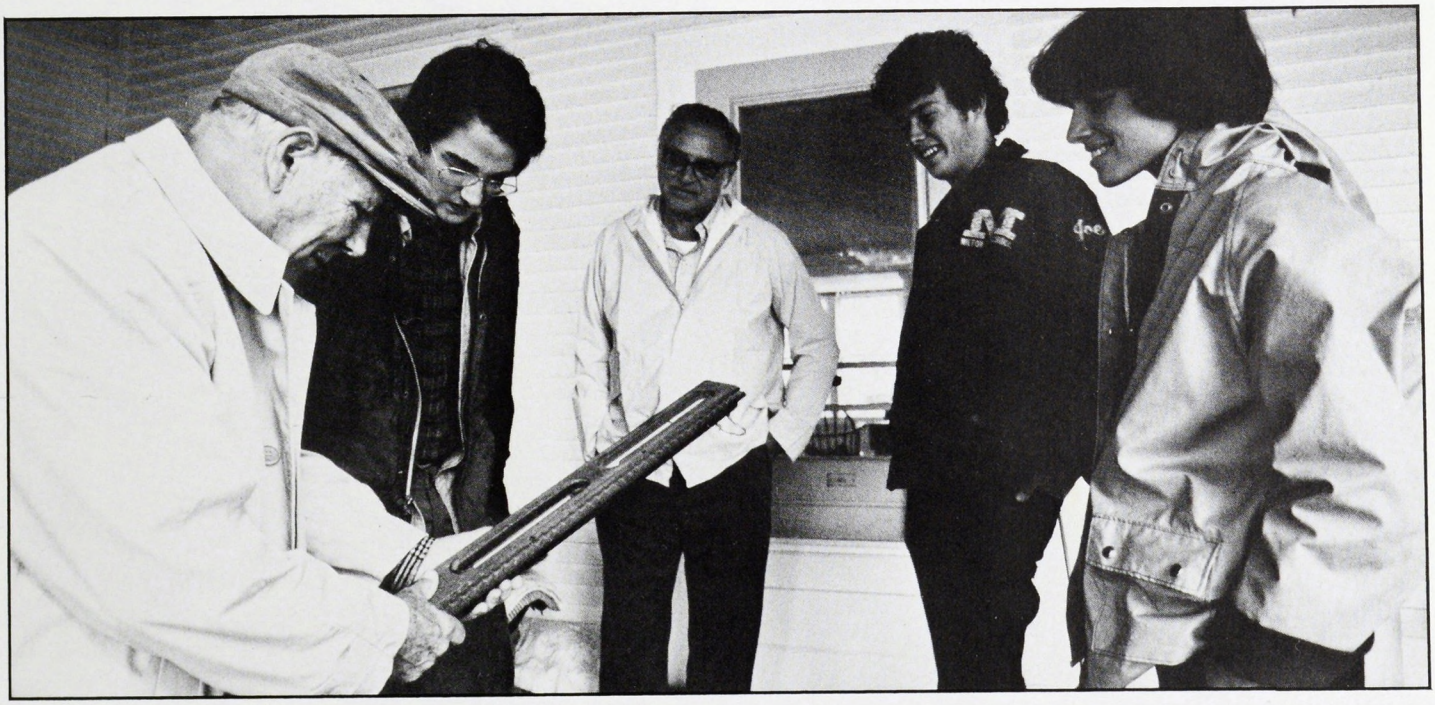
"Well, it's a little like having to go out and milk the cows each day. . . . Or deliver the mail — no matter what the weather. But that's the point, isn't it?" exclaims Witherell, to whom waist-deep snow, glare ice, and golf ball-sized hail are as much a fascination as a hindrance.

A resource for the entire community, the Cornwall Weatherworks is used by schools, civic groups, and researchers: "An enormous public service," says Professor Howard Woodin of Middlebury College, who makes use of the data as a basis for his course in "Ecosystem Analysis." And the Witherell telephone still rings with questions. An attorney, checking the temperature at the hour of his client's assault and battery. An orchardist, wanting to know if he should spray tomorrow. A resident of nearby Ripton, wondering if he'd have water in his mountain well that Fall.

"I answer as best I can, but I'm not a meteorologist," insists Witherell, who says he picked up his knowledge of weather "on the job." "I guess I've figured in the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, though," he allows. "You know, they give average temperatures for different areas, based on data from observers like me."

The Judge can tell you from his records that the coldest week of the year in his part of the world is apt to be January 22-28, and the warmest July 16-22. That the lowest temperature in an average Winter will be about 12° below zero, with the normal Winter mean about 22°. That Summers are mild with afternoon temperatures averaging 80° and nights cool at 50°-60°. That April, contrary to belief, is one of the drier months. That September, October and November are, as a whole, warmer than March, April and May. That

While the equipment has become somewhat more sophisticated over the years, the routine has varied little. Every morning the precipitation is measured and the highs and lows recorded. Photographs by Erik Borg.



for crops able to withstand a freeze as low as 28°, the average growing season is 171 days, from April 25 to October 13. And that in spite of the blizzards of 1969 and 1978, our New England Winters, have, in general, been less snowy than in the "old days."

"My mother used to tell of snow in her childhood," he says, "that was so deep she could slide right over the tops of fences." He recalls his own boyhood in the early twenties when he would tunnel between house and barn, 150 feet, under four-and-a-half foot drifts. But then, he allows, the Indians told the early settlers that the frosts were less severe than in the days of *their* ancestors. "We may be nostalgic for the old days, but do we want them to return?" asks Witherell, who in recent years has headed south with his wife Jessie a part of each Winter, leaving his son-in-law, "Rusty" Harding, to take the weather. A former Quartermaster in the submarine service, Harding would be the chosen successor to the family weatherworks.

When Judge Witherell retired in November, 1980, after officially being honored by the U.S. Weather Bureau, the observation station was moved a mile back down the road to the Charles Lane place where Harding now lives, and where Charles and Sarah Lane monitored the weather between them for close to an average lifetime. Across the street is the old Henry Lane house where it all began almost a century ago.

"We've come full cycle," says the Judge, who should know about cycles as well as anyone from the ninety-four years of weather charts in the wooden box in his workshop. He'll serve now as substitute for his son-in-law, as he did for his grandparents; and turn full-time to compiling the town's history — always the devoted chronicler of day-to-day events, which like the daily weather, make up a man's life.

A SCENIC PORTFOLIO

Winter Work, Winter Play

EXACTLY 115 years ago, John Greenleaf Whittier published his famous poem "Snow-Bound." He described a farm completely motionless in the wake of a major snowstorm. Not a bird, not a person moved. Not even the town plow came by.

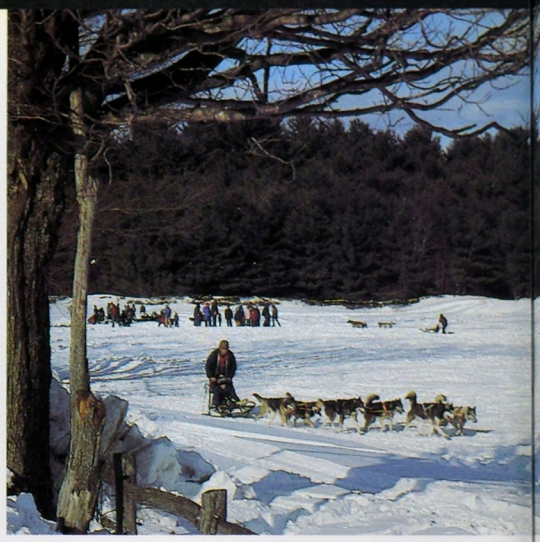
The legacy of that poem still affects the American view of Winter, as any rural Vermonter can testify. Out-of-staters drive along the narrow back roads in the Fall — no street lights, no emergency telephones, maybe not even a barn in sight, just the endless ranks of trees. They say to Vermont friends: "But how do you get out when it snows?" Or they hold on nervously as a Vermont friend takes his car uphill on a dirt road that curls over a mountain from nowhere to nowhere, and they ask incredulously: "Does the town really keep this road open all Winter?"

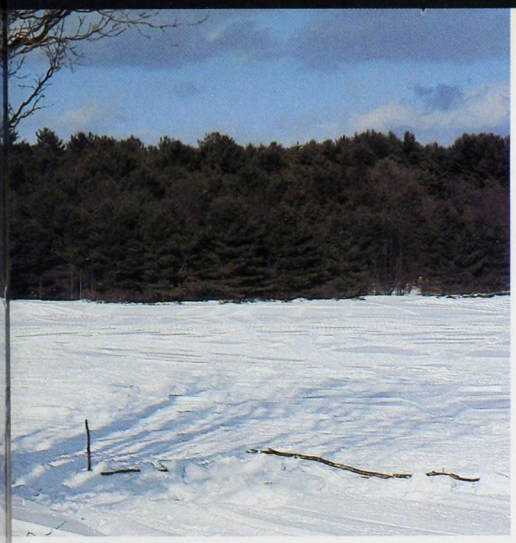
Of course the town does. Whittier wrote his poem down in Massachusetts, where they have less practice in dealing with snow. It's a curious

The North Hartland scene at left is by John Sherman; wood cutting in Marshfield by David Goska and early morning snow plowing in Woodstock by Huston Westover.

paradox that the further north you get and the more snow there is, the less people mind it and the more freely they go out. It has to be that way when there's snow on the ground for four or five months.

What really happens after a big snowfall is something like a carnival. Nearly everybody goes out. Skiers, of course, have been waiting and praying for fresh snow. But the road crews like it, too.





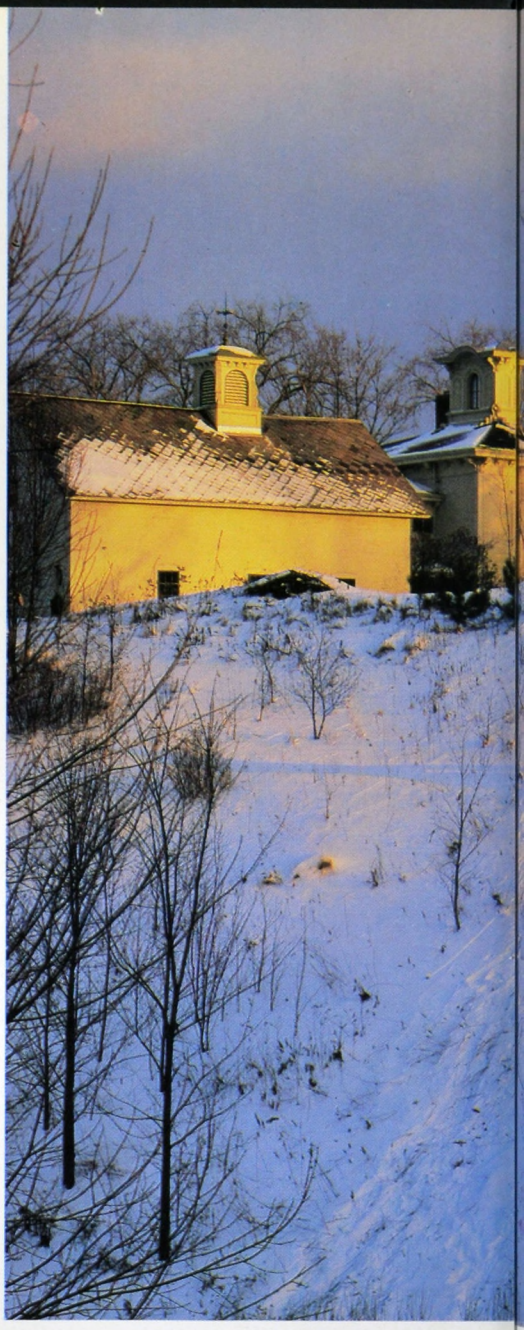
It's hard work to drive a plow all night. But it's also what they've been getting ready for all year, the culmination of their job, the repeated yearly acts of heroism.

In the villages, any child with a pair of mittens (and no child is without) is outdoors somewhere. The smallest ones are making tunnels and forts in the snowbanks left by the road crews.

The Strafford Meeting House at left was photographed by Richard W. Brown. C. T. Kazak found the dog sled race in Chester. Dolly Magnaghi photographed the logging operation in the Northeast Kingdom and Huston Westover, the children frolicking in the snowbank.

Bigger ones are sliding on anything from a piece of cardboard to a fancy aluminum coaster. Teenagers may be snowmobiling or packing trails for pay at the nearest ski resort, or even hitching an uncle's horse to the sleigh they spent all Summer fixing up.

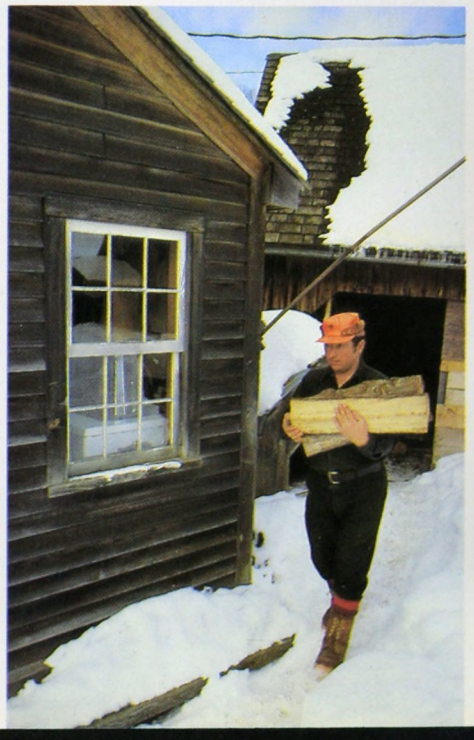
In the woods, this is the time of peak activity. Also of peak freedom. The whole forest floor — in the Summer covered with brush and briars — is one smooth highway. You'd better not drop your ax or your peavey; you may not find it again until Spring. But you can get places you can't reach at any other time of year. Now is when you go into



the cedar swamp and cut fenceposts. Now is when professional loggers can winch big hemlocks over the worst sort of ground and not leave a single scar. Now is when the snowshoed landowner can prune up his white pine three or four feet higher than he could reach at any other time of year.

Not that it's all work for the grown-ups. Now is also the best time for a 100-mile cross country ski tour, or for quietly exploring a deer yard, or for a day of ice-fishing. Now is when whole families glide down pasture slopes on toboggans. Winter work and Winter play: the state bustles with both.

— Noel Perrin



Two ways of getting from hilltop to bottom were photographed in Jericho by George A. Robinson, and the skaters were photographed by David Goska. Opposite page, Richard W. Brown took the photograph of the wood-carrying Vermonter and Robinson found the people-carrying sleigh.

In the Land of Poets and Singers, Romantic Scenery and Ancient Castles, Our Friend in Pomfret found

GOOD COOKING IN WALES

By FRANK LIEBERMAN
Photograph by HANSON CARROLL, *assisted by the author*

ON A RECENT TRIP to England to visit family, our friend in Pomfret and his wife made a rather lengthy detour and spent some time in northern Wales. "Hadn't been there in a long, long time," he told us. "So we were pleased to find it hasn't changed much. Except for having a sea coast, a clutch of ancient castles and a lot of prehistoric structures, it's much like Vermont. Fewer trees, but the same sort of high, rolling hills, narrow valleys, farms here and there, small towns and villages. Matter of fact, quite a few Welshmen came to Vermont in the 1860s and '70s to work in the slate quarries in the western part of the state. Nice friendly people, the Welsh. We were fascinated by the prevalence of the Welsh Gaelic; old and young speak it seemingly in preference to English. Very noticeable up in the hills where we watched sheep dog trials one day. No English spoken at all, though they switched tongues without pause when talking to us.

"One thing really confused us and that was Harlech Castle. We remembered it as hanging on a steep hill above the sea in massive solitude. Not so, not at all. It is indeed on a hillside and impressively massive but it looks positively comfortable, surrounded by a small, placid village that has clearly been there for hundreds of years. So much for memory!

"Harlech is one of seven defensive castles built in the 13th century by Edward the First. They're all fairly close together, 15 or 20 miles apart, in those days just about a day's ride on horseback from one to the next. Makes it easy for castle freaks like us. Visited five of them in three days. Had splendid time climbing narrow tower stairs, walking battlements, imagining clangor of armor-clad knights in the court yards, and banquets in the Great Halls. Tremendous, even in the misting rain.

"This sort of thing gives you an appetite and we were pleased to find some exceptional cooks here and there. Managed to get a few recipes, too. Must admit that the 'Chocolate Pye' is not Welsh. It's from the Evesham Hotel (nice place, very good cooking), still in England but very close to Wales. Never mind, it's a delicious confection and easy to make."

Combining this nearly Welsh dessert with his Welsh soup and main course our friend in Pomfret served the following dinner, accompanied by a fine dry sparkling hard cider made by *his* friend, artist Gary Milek of Windsor. If you don't have such a convenient source, try a mixture of equal parts of inexpensive champagne and good appley cider.

LEEK BROTH (serves 4)

3 *large potatoes*
6 *large leeks*
2 *cups strong stock*
2 *cups milk*
2 *oz. butter*
Chopped parsley

Peel potatoes; trim beard and top half of green leaves from leeks, discard dried or decayed leaves. Slice leeks and potatoes thinly. Melt butter in pan, cook vegetables until just beginning to brown, then simmer in stock until soft. Puree, then add milk, salt and pepper to taste. Heat, but do not boil, else it will curdle. Garnish with chopped parsley. Croutons would be nice, too.

HONEYED RABBIT (serves 6)
oven at 325°

3 *to* 4 *lb. rabbit*
3 *Tbspn. flour*
2 *tspn. ground ginger**
2 *large onions*
2 *oz. butter*
⅓ *cup dark honey*
1 *cup cider*
1 *Tbspn. vinegar, or more*
2 *Tbspn. chopped rosemary*
Carrots

Cut rabbit in serving pieces. Make seasoned flour with salt, pepper and the ground ginger. Coat rabbit.

Chop onions coarsely, sauté in butter until just browning at edges. Remove to casserole. Sauté rabbit in same pan, adding more butter as needed. Brown on both sides on medium high heat. Add to casserole on top of onions. Spoon honey over meat, then pour cider and vinegar down one side of casserole, not on rabbit. Sprinkle with half the rosemary. Cover lightly and put in top of oven, at 325°, cook one hour, adding more cider if needed. Clean, slice and parboil carrots; add them to the rabbit at hour's end and cook, uncovered, at 350° ½ hour more, or until rabbit is tender.

Serve with mashed potatoes and garnish lightly with the remaining rosemary, or parsley if you prefer.

EVESHAM CHOCOLATE PYE (serves 6)

6 *oz. raw almonds*
3 *oz. sugar*
1 *egg white*
¼ *tspn. ground cinnamon*

Grind almonds to coarse flour. Beat egg white until stiff, gradually adding sugar, then slowly beat in almonds and cinnamon. Refrigerate ½ hour, then roll out to fit an 8 inch pie pan. *Butter the pan,* fit the crust, making a good strong edge at top with thin rolls of extra crust. Pierce bottom of crust with fork several times, then bake unfilled 15 minutes, *no more.* Cool before filling.

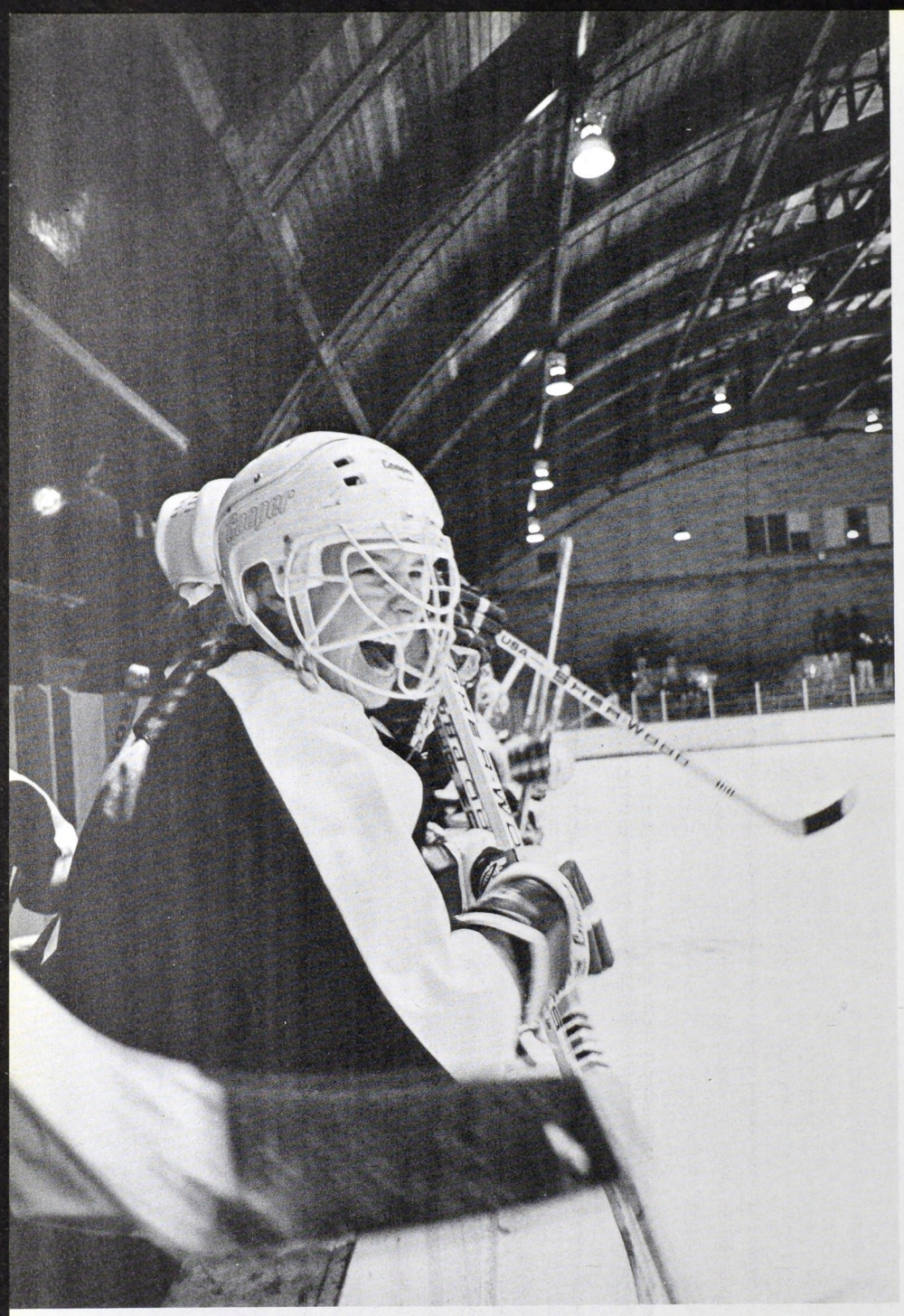
Chocolate Filling

4 *oz. semi-sweet chocolate*
4 *oz. bitter chocolate*
¼ *cup granulated sugar*
¼ *cup cool water*
5 *eggs, separated*
1 *tspn. vanilla*

Melt chocolate, sugar and water in top of double-boiler, stirring until very smooth. Remove from heat and cool, stirring occasionally. When cool beat yolks and add to chocolate with vanilla. Beat whites until stiff, using large bowl since you will next fold chocolate into whites. Do so only long enough to blend thoroughly, then spoon it into almond crust and refrigerate 2 or 3 hours. Decorate with blanched almonds or whipped cream, or both. This excellent mousse is also delicious all by itself.

* If you can get fresh ginger root add 2 or more tablespoons of it, finely chopped, sprinkled over the rabbit before cooking.

A Mistake! In the recipe for **Pommefret Tart** in the Autumn issue the 6th item in the 1st column is ¼ *cup strong maple syrup.* Wrong! Instead it should be in the 2nd column, after gelatine, and it should be ¼ *cup of sherry,* not maple syrup. Our friend in Pomfret is mortified.



Middlebury's Ice Ladies

By Mark Candon
Photographs by Erik Borg

Inside Memorial Field House, the Middlebury Panthers are preparing for another stormy battle, pitting them against an inter-collegiate hockey power like Dartmouth, Vermont, St. Lawrence, Colby, or Princeton. It's a typical hockey night at the Field House as Lyle, Starr, and Polk, the Middlebury tri-captains, lead the team out onto the ice and around the surface for the first period warm-up. Middlebury goalies Gordon and Shea, by far the slowest afoot with their heavy goalie pads, are nevertheless a center of attention. Teammates skate past offering support with a tap of their hockey sticks. Just before the opening face-off, the Panthers receive final instructions from head coach Mike Karin before exploding toward center ice.

The idea the women shouldn't participate in aggressive, competitive sports is certainly outdated but ice hockey can be another matter. "You get a reaction," admits Ann Machado, class of '82, a blond defenseman who also plays soccer at the prestigious liberal arts school. " 'Ice hockey? You play ice hockey?' "

It was only six years ago that the women's ice hockey program was started at Middlebury. Begun on a skatestring, the original team went 2-0 in its first season, wearing blue sweatpants and red sweaters. The players themselves arranged the games, provided their own transportation, and bore most of the costs.

The program began to flourish when Karin entered as volunteer coach in 1976. He had held the national record for assists while a Middlebury hockey player in the late 1950s, was an alternate to the United States Olympic team in 1960. He was also a former assistant men's coach at Princeton, where he started a women's team. Hearing about the new Middlebury club sport, Karin took time off from his local real estate business to begin coaching. The hockey became more serious.

At Middlebury as elsewhere, club sports have to go through an incubation period before obtaining varsity status. In the early days, members of the men's varsity team would watch the women play. Most enjoyed the new sight, but some grumbled about the loss of ice time. As 1981 tri-captain Ellen Starr recalls, "Most people thought it was pretty much of a joke when we started. My friends used to come watch us because it was fun. Now they come to cheer us on and appreciate the game."

In 1978, the college began chipping in with money for travel and safety equipment, although the players still subsidized a good part of the expenses and

Coach Mike Karin, below, gives pre-game pep talk and Assistant Coach "Duke" Nelson offers encouragement as the Middlebury women's hockey team takes to the ice. Below, a score!

set up the games. This year, the women's team is going to become a full fledged varsity sport, subsidized entirely by the college. Its budget and scheduling will come completely and directly from the athletic director's office.

Mike Karin is assisted in his coaching duties by Walter "Duke" Nelson, a Middlebury athletic legend. Nelson, now 74, began his coaching career in 1932 and has coached football, baseball, and golf — as well as hockey — and was the college's athletic director from 1956 to 1969. Duke enjoys being a key part of the women's team, and he keeps the girls loose by coming up with a nickname for just about every player. If you hear "Bonzie," "Berkshire," or "Jamaica Red" yelled from behind the Middlebury bench, that's Duke Nelson.

"This is a great sport for women," Nelson says. "I hope they don't go into checking. The game is skill and skating now, and they're starting to learn the little things." "You can hit just as long as it doesn't look like it," Gordon says. "It also depends a lot on who you're playing and the referees." "In women's hockey, you have to go for the puck," adds Machado. "But there's no getting away from some body contact."

"There's a big difference between figure skates and hockey skates," says team member Meg Marion. "It's a totally different way of moving on the ice."

Karin is a demanding coach, who drills his team for an hour and a half every day. "We take it seriously," he says. "We work on drills, over and over, on power plays. The emphasis is on skating and stick handling. And, of course, on getting in playing shape."

On mid-Winter evenings, the chill inside Memorial Field House comes not from Lake Champlain, but from the ice. Defenseman Sue Lyle dumps the puck ahead to the corner, where Buff Woodworth digs it out and dishes to Michele Plante in the slot. There's a feint in front of the visiting goalie, a quick shot, and the flashing of the red light directly behind the net. Another Middlebury score!

Duke Nelson shouts encouragement from behind the bench, and the happy home crowd cheers the team's skillful execution. Bandannas get mussed as the Middlebury girls rejoice at center ice.

Last year the Panthers devastated Williams and Wesleyan, but lost an overtime heartbreaker to the University of Vermont on their way to a 6-9 record.

"We had a great year last Winter," says Mike Karin. "If you don't count the wins and losses."

The Hulbert Outdoor Center at Fairlee

By CHARLES BOHNER
Photographs by HANSON CARROLL

THE ENGLISH TEACHER at our school in Delaware, Jean Astolfi, first brought up the subject at the lunch table.

"How about Winter in Vermont?"

The other teachers stared at her in disbelief. Not that the Newark Center won't consider any suggestion, no matter how radical. Our little school — seventy students and eight teachers — has earned its reputation as an innovative place, constantly in search of new ways to persuade children that learning is fun. And after ten years, we haven't run out of ideas, or of enthusiasm. But even Jean Astolfi, the staff's resident optimist, saw the difficulties.

"It's 450 miles from Newark to Fairlee, Vermont," she said. "I've checked the map."

Ray Magnani, our science teacher, shook his head. "That's a long trip for our youngsters," he said. In the silence that followed, he added, "And that's a long trip for *us*."

We knew what he meant. Twelve hours on turnpikes with a van full of ten to fourteen-year-olds sounded a shade too ambitious, even for an experimental school such as ours. Newark, Delaware, is central to Baltimore and Philadelphia, New York and Washington, and our students are constantly on the move in search of their education.

"Vermont. A terrific idea," was the consensus. "Only too far to go."

But Jean, with the zeal of one who knows the Green Mountain State well, had an advantage and was determined to exploit it. February is, as all teachers know, the doldrums of the school year. Summer vacation is still only a mirage on the June horizon, and the great notions that seemed to promise so much in September have somehow failed to winter over. The teachers gathered around the lunch table were, at that moment, suffering the familiar symptoms.

But Jean had done her homework.

"If we *could* go," she began, "I know the perfect place."

The perfect place turned out to be the Hulbert Outdoor Center. It was, Jean explained, on Lake Morey near the town of Fairlee in east central Vermont. Owned and operated by the Aloha Foundation, a non-profit educational organization founded to perpetuate the ideals of the Aloha Camps, the Hulbert Outdoor Center was established three years ago to make its facilities available year round.

The Aloha Camps are, by now, a Vermont legend. For over 75 years they have provided a rich Summer experience for boys and girls. Jean knew the camps well — her three children have spent many Summers there — and she reckoned, correctly as it proved, that any program sponsored by the Aloha Foundation would be both adventurous and educational.

Jean had telephoned the director, John Hall, and had discovered that the aims and methods of the Hulbert Outdoor Center were strikingly similar to those of our own Newark Center. Both work with young people individually or in small groups to build confidence and to develop initiative. Like us, the Hulbert Outdoor Center has found games, especially those involving problem-solving and cooperation, to be an ideal way to engage the interest of children while at the same time stretching their minds and stimulating their imaginations.

The approach was the same, but the Hulbert Outdoor Center enjoys a unique advantage. We live in the Northeast Corridor, that ever-expanding belt of asphalt, concrete and neon that stretches from Boston to Washington and beyond. The area has great advantages for schools, and we make full use of them, but the corridor is one of the most heavily industrialized and urbanized areas in the world. The Hulbert Outdoor Center, by contrast, is a place of extraordinary natural beauty. The pines grow thickly down to the shore of Morey, a lake of surpassing loveliness and clarity. In addition to the 1,000 acres of land owned by the Aloha Foundation, miles of woods threaded with cross country trails and sledding tracks stretch away in all directions.

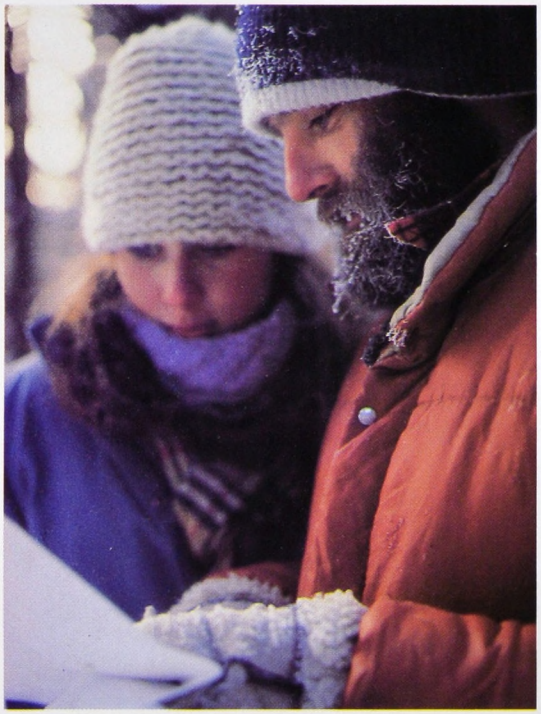
In this setting, the Hulbert Outdoor Center mounts a variety of activities designed to make maximum use of the site. Instead of reading assigned pages of a textbook, the children go into the woods, track animals to their natural habitats, and study their behavior. Sensory activities enhance the youngsters' appreciation of bird songs, cloud formations and wild flowers. And the street-wise and city-bred, already alert to the perils of speeding drivers, muggers and pollution, have the chance to learn the secrets of survival in a wilderness that can be equally perilous.

The Winter program at the Center emphasizes the outdoor skills needed not only to survive but to prevail in a world of deep snow where toothpaste freezes in the tube and Vermont cheddar hardens like Vermont marble. Students for whom *dehydration* and *hypothermia* have been

The Hulbert Outdoor Center on Lake Morey, site of the Aloha Camps in Summer months, is designed to help young people develop self-confidence and competence in a Winter setting.

merely textbook terms to memorize in centrally heated classrooms are confronted suddenly with the possibility of the real thing. They quickly discover that a Vermont snowscape, no matter how picturesque, is a rather different proposition when they set out to cross it stride by stride on snow shoes or cross country skis. And that same snow can efface Summer landmarks and make the ability to read a compass as crucial as dry matches.

Instructors at the Hulbert Outdoor Center no more thrust a youngster into snow survival training than Summer counselors at the Aloha Camps toss a nonswimmer into Lake Morey. Rather they develop their programs gradually, their students beginning with compass exercises and going on to overnight trips requiring specific trail and cooking skills.



On the trails that surround Lake Morey, campers experience the unforgiving Vermont Winter. But with their new knowledge, expert leaders and each other, they make the experience a positive one.

They learn the virtues of simplicity, traveling light and settling for "one-pot-glop." The final expedition, planned entirely by the students, typically includes the ascent, with full packs and snow shoes, of one of the nearby mountains. Pitching their tents in the lee of whatever shelter the summit offers, the students go about their tasks of making camp with the confidence and quiet satisfaction of those who have shared and overcome hardships.

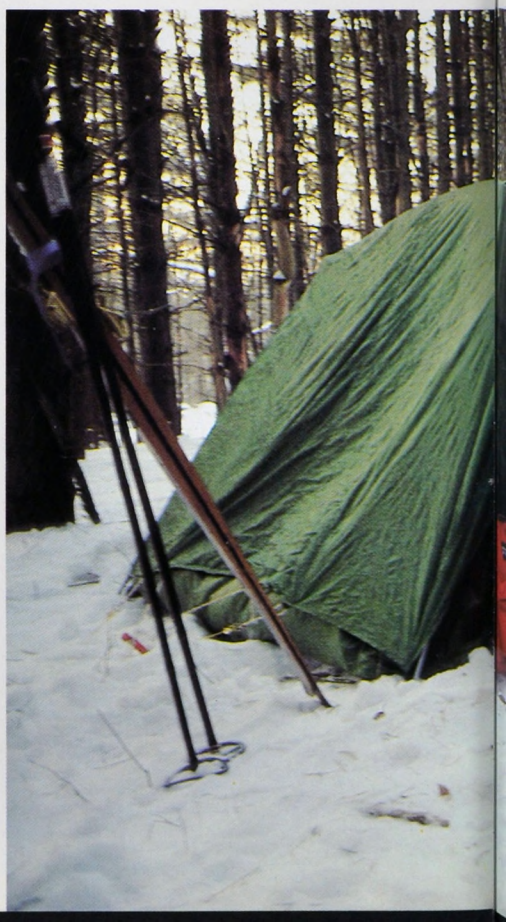
Jean captured our attention with her description of these programs at the Hulbert Outdoor Center. But the following day when she showed us her Vermont slides, we were convinced.

"Some of our kids have never seen a mountain," Ray Magnani said. "So let's go."

And so we went.

The trip was limited to 15 children, the number the school van can accommodate, and at six o'clock on a dark morning in March we started up the New Jersey Turnpike. The 12 hours of turnpike driving, hours which had loomed up as a forbidding obstacle to our journey, turned out to be an advantage. Our youngsters cheered when we reached the Vermont border. The next 90 miles north through ever-steepening mountains signaled to them that the arduous trip had been worth the effort: we were entering a different world.

The main lodge of the Hulbert Outdoor Center is a rambling, clapboard structure fronting Lake Morey. The lodge is a rustic, inviting building, winterized with large wood stoves and divided up for dormitory living. Large windows offer a view of the frozen lake — the only sign of



Before embarking on an outdoor experience, a group of attendees learn how to stuff their backpacks, how to light the camp cook stove and how to read maps.

life, a few ice fishermen trying their luck. John Hall, the director, was there to meet us. After years as a teacher and camp counselor, he is giving all his energy and his knowledge of the outdoors to the Center.

John dispensed with preliminaries. His sugaring operation was in the final stages, and he needed help right away. At once the children, forgetting the discomforts of the van, fanned out into the woods to gather sap and bring it to the large pans set over an open fire. They sidled up to the blaze, warming themselves against the chill of their first Vermont evening and listening to John discourse on the fine art of maple sugaring. That night at supper (one third of the group drew KP), the children had a chance to sample John's syrup, "the real thing" they assured one another and not what passed for it at the Newark supermarket.

The Hulbert Outdoor Center is highly adaptable, varying its programs according to the needs and wishes of the group attending. Because we were late in applying and the Center's schedule was fast filling up, we finally settled on mid-March, the last week of Winter. Much of the snow had melted, but the Center was ready with new programs designed for different weather. John Hall and his two associates, Linda Coyle and Bill Chamberlain, packed our days and evenings with a variety of activities which subtly encouraged a balance of individual initiative and group cooperation.

The most exciting and most popular of the activities at the Hulbert Outdoor Center was an elaborate "Ropes Course." Hanging to the end of a heavy hauser, each child swung out across a stream, the more daring shouting Tarzan yells as they landed on the opposite bank. Equally fun but considerably more difficult was the "Tire Traverse." Above a marshy spot in the woods, five automobile tires were suspended from ropes set apart at tantalizing distances from one another. Each child had to get himself swinging, pendulum-fashion, until he could reach the next tire and clamber onto it, then move on to the next.

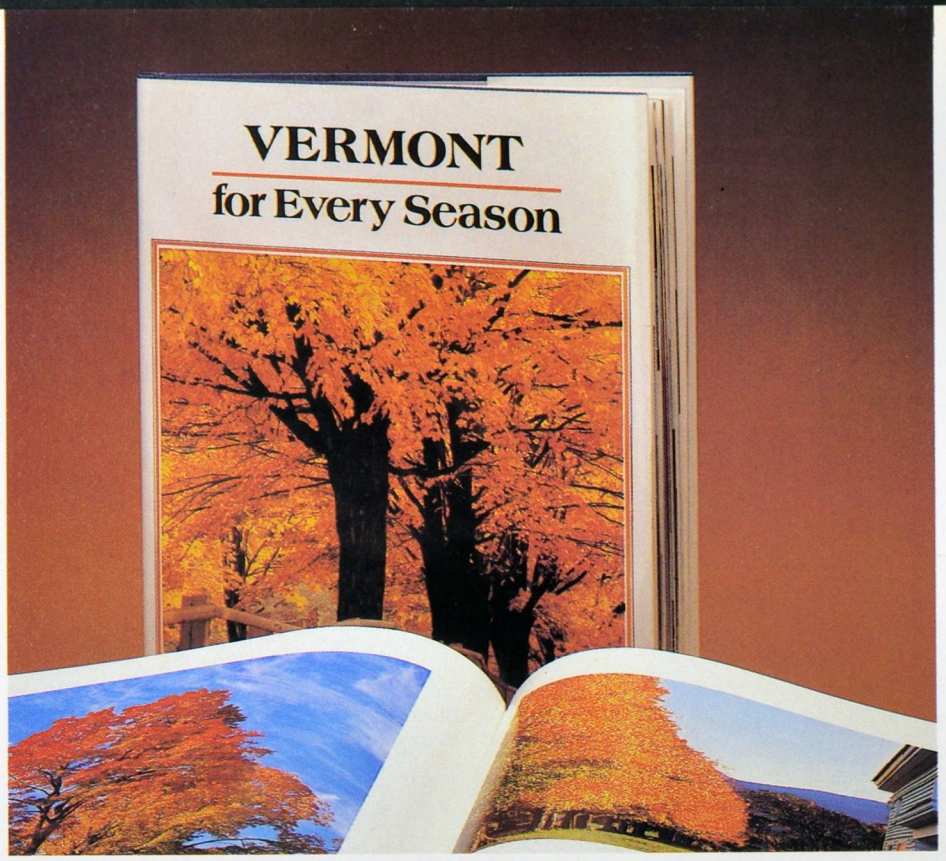
For the children the week was an exploration and an adventure. Although they were learning a great deal from the experience, they were chiefly having the time of their lives. At the Hulbert Outdoor Center, a compass course is a "treasure hunt" and sensory activities are "grokking." The study of food-chain relationships becomes a game of "predator-prey" in which players are assigned the roles of beetle, mole, hawk or deer, and, in an ingenious variation on hide-and-seek, try to survive by trapping their natural prey without themselves being caught by their natural enemies.

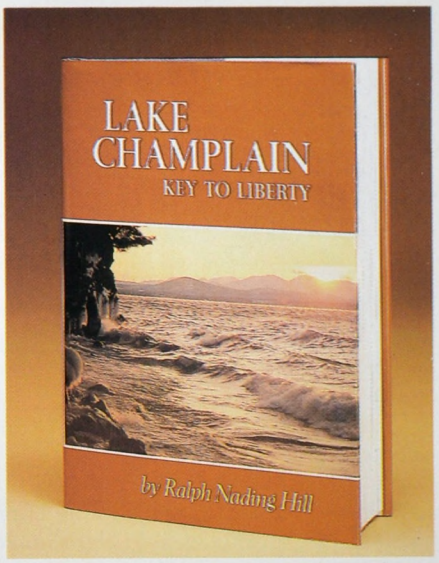
For the teachers from the Newark Center, the most remarkable part of the program was the manner in which the staff of the Hulbert Outdoor Center consistently kept before the group the uniqueness of the natural environment and the beauty of the Vermont landscape. Each child was urged to choose a "Secret Spot," a special place remote from the group where for short periods during the week he could sit quietly and assess for himself the significance of his experience.

The last day of our stay was the most memorable. Packing a trail lunch, our group hiked up along a mountain stream, emerging at last high above Lake Morey at Eagle's Bluff, a promontory offering a view of ranges of hills stretching away north and east to the horizon.

Looking down at the lodge, we could see in one sweep the sites of the week's activities. Most of the children had never seen a large frozen lake, and Morey lay before them, gray as granite, and crisscrossed with the first streaks of the spring thaw. The sky was pewter, and the woods were browned by winter with only touches here and there of muted green. Our group was unusually subdued. Both students and teachers seemed absorbed in the beauty of that severe and unspoiled Winter landscape. It would be a sight worth remembering at the end of those 12 hours back on the turnpike.

Gifts





* BOOKS

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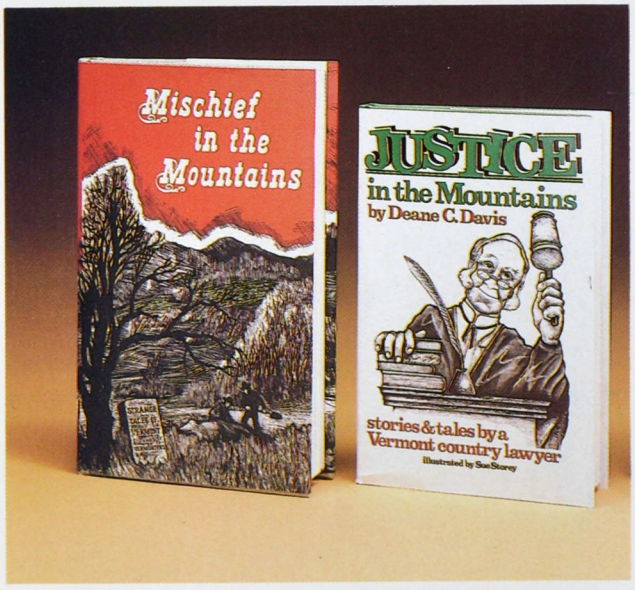

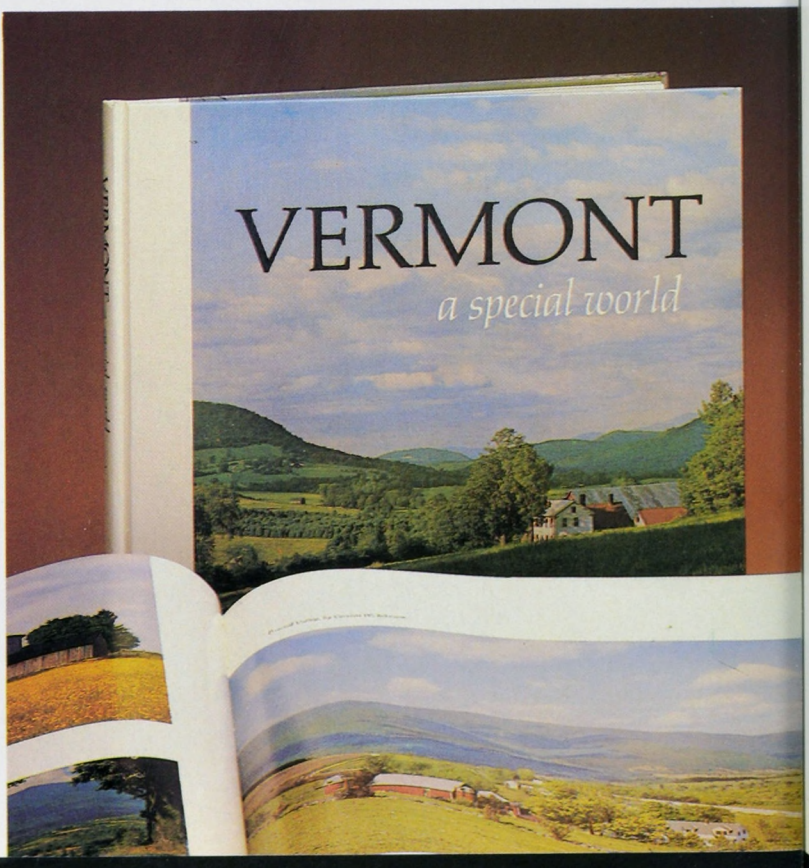

That Say 'Vermont'

*VERMONT LIFE MAGAZINE

Time has a way of almost stopping in Vermont. Life's usual blinding speed slows perceptibly here and visitors to the state are able to catch much more than merely a glimpse now and then. At **Vermont Life Magazine,** we offer that very pace on our printed pages. Every quarter and with every season, the state's official magazine presents Vermont, gradually, civilly, and very beautifully.

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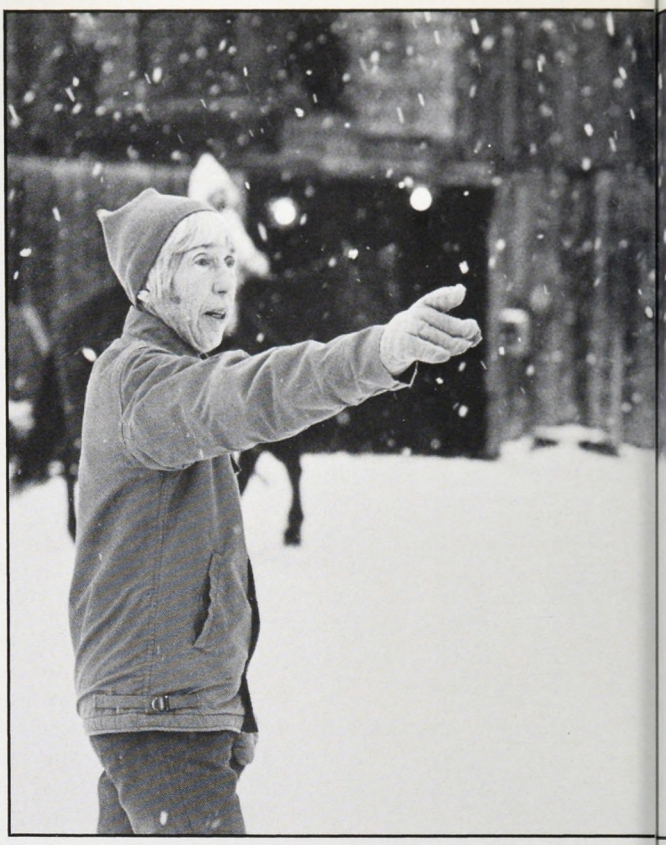
'Ride Like a Lady, Sit Like a Queen'



By NANCY CORNELL
Photographs by GEORGE A. ROBINSON

MORNING'S CHILL finds Lyda in the barn, haying and watering the horses, addressing each one in a soothing voice, surveying each one with experienced eyes. She runs her rugged hands over flanks and down legs, making sure each horse has fared well through the night. "They always greet me with enthusiasm. 'Come on, Mother,' they say. 'It's time to eat!'" By 7:30 Lyda has eaten breakfast. She leaves the dishes for later and heads back to the barn to groom, check tack, and clean stalls. At nine the day's first rider arrives.

Lyda stands close by as her student saddles a horse and leads it out to the mounting block by the ring. Once in the saddle, the rider collects the reins and awaits further instructions. Lyda presses the rider's left knee into the saddle and looks her student hard in the eye. "Sit tall," she says quietly. "Sit like a queen." The rider straightens. The lesson has begun.

Lyda Brown, age 71, remembers when Vermonters kept horses for work, not just sport. Now she makes her living imparting horse sense to the young and the old, the timid and the foolhardy. Teaching, and keeping seven horses fed, shod, healthy and mannerly is no small task. But Lyda Brown has a toughness about her that comes of having survived her share of Vermont Winters and Spring floods. Accustomed to unpredictable turns of weather and fortune, she shows no intention of abandoning the lifestyle she has forged in the foothills of Breadloaf Mountain.

Born in 1910, Lyda grew up with her brothers, Paul and Rufus, and her sisters, Elizabeth and Ellen, on their parents' dairy farm in Cornwall. Lyda's father, Sam Jewett, worked the farm and ran a milk route behind his team. "From the time I was old enough to know the difference between a cow and a horse, a horse was all that mattered," Lyda remembers. "I started early, riding the team horses, but I couldn't ride them when they were tired, even home from the field. Father'd say, 'No, they've had all they need,' even though I was just a little bit of a girl." Lyda rode whenever she could, struggling to sit tall though, as a child, her legs barely reached around the broad backs of the work horses.

When she was fourteen, Lyda's grandfather gave her a black driving mare which was part Percheron. But farm tasks usually came first, and Lyda never knew when her father would be using the mare in the fields. On her seventeenth birthday, Lyda's father gave her a Morgan colt which she named "Timothy Lindbergh." "I never trained Tim to harness, though it would have done him good, because I didn't want him to turn up missing when I wanted to ride."

Although it was clear from the beginning that Lyda's main interest lay with horses, circumstances postponed her career as an equestrienne. When, at the age of 28, she had the opportunity to go to riding school, Lyda packed herself off to Miss Lennington's in Milton Mass. There, in return for her work as a cook and stable hand, she perfected her riding and learned to teach. For the next decade, she held various jobs as a riding instructor — at the Putney School in Vermont, at the Montclair, N.J. Riding Club, and at Summer camps in New Hampshire and Maine. Always in the back of her mind was the determination to start a riding school of her own in the Green Mountains.

But marriage and children stalled her plans for a time. At the age of 55, she and her two sons, Tom and Bruce, moved to a modest brick house in New Haven. "After the downpayment on the house I had less than a dollar in the bank. That's how strong my faith was that I'd make it. A friend from Ripton offered to give me a horse for free. I thought, 'Well if this isn't something. My cup runneth over.' "

Lyda's childhood on the Cornwall farm firmed in her a dauntless strength. "I can

Lyda Brown tells her riders: "Don't be afraid of getting bounced off, because if you're not afraid, you come off at ease and land on your feet. Of course you don't want *to come off, but don't be afraid."*

do anything I set my mind to. This is what I've tried to teach my boys. The world is there for you to make your living. My father was a very determined person, so I come by it naturally."

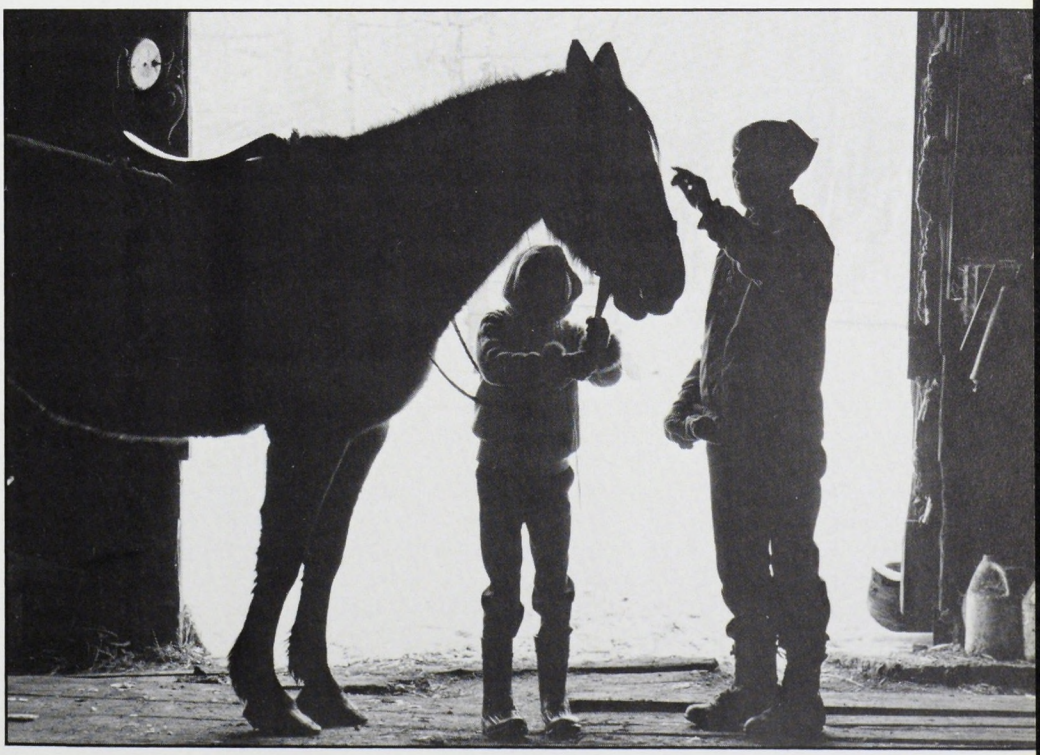
Today, she makes most of her living teaching riding at her home to children and adults, beginners and advanced riders, local 4-H groups and some weekend tourists. An enthusiastic amateur naturalist, Lyda treats trail riders to a thorough lesson on local plant and animal life, while keeping a strict eye on their equestrian form and control along the bridle paths.

Lyda's students respectfully call her Mrs. Brown and she is the toughest of teachers. She traverses the center of the ring, wearing faded jeans and a dusty work jacket. Concentrating hard on her riders, she shouts directions, correcting, cajoling, never noticing if it starts to rain or snow in the middle of the lesson. "You roll in those knees, Honey, and *tell* that horse where to go, don't *ask* him. This is no pony ride!" But Lyda's praise, because it's dealt sparingly, inspires confidence in the most doubtful student. Combing her fingers through her functionally cropped grey hair, she describes her philosophy of teaching: "It's true I'm firm, and very persistent. But you've got to be firm because you've got two creatures to get together before they're going to be able to get the feel of each other."

Summer and Fall are Lyda's busiest seasons, with riders coming almost every day. During these times, she rarely has the opportunity to take her "Cadillac," a thoroughbred named Lady, out for a spin. In Winter when there are fewer students, she has more time to ride and to contribute to the bazaars, suppers, and socials put on by her church. "I teach riding because I enjoy it, not because I'm getting rich. I get such a charge when my riders improve; when they really hear me and start to get it!"

Lyda admits there are parts of her work that her age makes difficult. "Cleaning the barn I don't mind a bit. But I'm not a good nurse. When a horse gets sick or hurt, I don't have anyone to help hold him. As soon as they smell medicine they say, 'Oh dear, Mother, you're going to kill me!' and start jumping around. I say, 'Oh button up your schnoz, it's not so bad!'

"Someone asked me how much longer was I going to ride," Lyda says. "I try not to think about it too much. It's the only thing I want to do. Am I going to be riding when I'm 90?" She laughs. "Well, why not? Maybe when I'm 90 I'll give up my housecleaning jobs. But not my horses. There's no better therapy for your body or your mind than riding. Just walk your horse down the road and make him go the way you want him to and you see things. There's a peace. As Teddy Roosevelt said: the outside of a horse is good for the inside of man." ∞



'Snowmobiles...All the Impact of Field Mice'

By Arthur Ristau
Photographs by Hanson Carroll

BARRE — Noontime of a brief December day and the sun's stingy transit is already arching toward the bleak, blue-grey horizon. Euclid Messier squints at the clear, cold sky then tentatively probes the sparse, crusty surface with the toe of his boot. It hasn't snowed for a month.

"They'll be here," he says. "They'll be along, soon."

Faintly now from over the hill floats a wind-whipped whirring. Then several sounds begin to blend — engine whine, shouts, laughter — surging to a swelling crescendo.

Soon they clear the crest, speckling the barren landscape like super scorpions — bouncing, swerving, dipping briefly out of sight into the undulating hillocks, then buoyantly emerging, soaring aloft and — if only for a second — floating free.

Like lemmings they funnel, merging into a single trail, then with a final, exhuberant race of their engines, the machines come to rest. There is congratulatory back-slapping as helmets are jerked off and old friends recognize and noisily greet each other.

The snowmobiles are back; the annual ritual is fulfilled. The "Ride In — Old Home Weekend" for Vermont's snowmobile set is on.

In examining Winter recreational phenomena in Vermont, the impact of the snowmobile can arguably be equated only to that of the uphill ski lift. But unlike skiing, snowmobiling has social and cultural consequences that render it unique to the Vermont Winter scene. It has attracted and sustained a zealous, enthusiastic army of participants, most of whom had heretofore spent their Winters indoors.

And despite two successive seasons of less-than-normal snow accumulations, the sport flourishes. About 30,000 snowmobiles — one for every four Vermont families — are now registered in the state.

For many Vermonters and visitors alike, the snowmobile is the illegitimate offspring of a bulldozer and a chain saw. Cross country skiers, whose requirements for cover and terrain are similar to those of snowmobilers, often view their competitors for Vermont's recreational space as though they had just spotted something squirming through their Gorp. They shouldn't.

Dr. Martin L. Johnson of Plainfield, for five years the secretary of Vermont's Agency of Environmental Conservation and a man who regularly enjoys both sports, says cross country skiing is more environmentally injurious than snowmo-

biling. In fact, Johnson's bright blue eyes practically ignite when he speaks of snowmobiling and its partisans.

"The sport has enticed thousands of Vermonters out of their kitchens and living rooms during the Winter," says Johnson. "And these people have become strong supporters of Vermont's efforts to manage and protect its environment. Of all the sporting and environmental groups, snowmobilers are the most effective. They are dedicated and they are superbly organized."

That organization is, in great measure, a tribute to Carmi Duso of East Montpelier, the seminal spirit of Vermont snowmobiling. Duso, 78, moved to East Montpelier 12 years after retiring from New England Telephone Company. Quiet, self-effacing but determined, Duso has, more than any other, made snowmobiling both popular and politically potent. Vermont is first nationally in both the per capita ownership of snowmobiles and the number of miles of trails.

Duso is the director of VAST — the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers — a network of 200 local and regional snowmobile clubs with a total membership of 15,000. One of the reasons he's been so effective is because snowmobiling has a gross value of $20 million a year in state income — second only to alpine skiing as a Winter revenue source.

"Many motels and restaurants now stay open in Winter because of snowmobiling," says Duso, "and our corridor trails are planned to pass near these motels, restaurants and service stations. Some motels are booked solid through the Winter with non-resident snowmobilers from as far away as Maryland."

Snowmobile registration fees yield $200,000 annually in state revenues with about one in five of those dollars coming from non-residents. This year, the Legislature agreed to allocate 75 percent of the fee income for the development and maintenance of trails on both public and private lands.

Four years ago VAST acquired 200 miles of corridor trails. This Winter they'll be responsible for 1,250 miles and with the new fee diversion system the network will spread even faster.

The clubs, with names such as the "Bradford Snow Snakes" and the "East Montpelier Gully Jumpers," also build suspension bridges, some of them significant engineering feats, which permit weekend caravans of more than 100 miles. It is this immense network that stimulates annual events such as the Barre "Ride In."

The snowmobiler and cross country skier form a natural alliance. They often use the same trails and can help each other in emergencies. Below, riders on the famed "Ride In" line up and take off.

Euclid Messier and his wife, Ronnie, are leaders of the Barre Sno-Bees, another of VAST's satellites. Each year they sponsor and host the trek to Barre which last December lured more than 100 snowmobilers from three states and Quebec.

"It's a reunion, really," says Messier. "Each year most of the same people come back and, depending on the weather, there's usually always a few more."

The social aspect of snowmobiling intrigues Martin Johnson. "It's not necessary to be a Thoreau, living desolate and lonely in a hovel in the woods, in order to truly appreciate the environment," he says.

"I think it's great for people to get out in the Winter and socialize and enjoy together the happiness and contentment that accrues to the Vermont snowmobiler as he and his family enjoy our unique combination of fresh air, scenery, snow and trees."

Since Vermont is down to its last five billion trees, some adverse comment is occasionally heard about snowmobiles and seedlings. Dr. Johnson will have none of it. "A snowmobile," he insists, "is about as environmentally harmful as a field mouse."

Johnson, now president of an engineering consultant firm, argues that "cross-country skiers jabbing their poles into the snow do more environmental damage than snowmobiles, which ride on top of the snow."

Regardless of one's sentiments in the controversy, it cannot be disputed that snowmobilers contribute substantially to the ambiance enjoyed by cross country skiers. Snowmobile clubs negotiate with landowners for rights-of-way, groom trails and build bridges, all of which are readily available to touring skiers.

The uneasy truce between the two factions is occasionally breached because cross country enthusiasts sometimes bring their dogs with them. "You can't control a dog if you're on skis," says Mrs. Milan Lawson of Montpelier, "and they can be a problem for snowmobilers."

VAST, however, is stringently self-policing. "Anyone who wants a sign saying, 'No Snowmobiles Allowed,' can get one merely by calling or writing us in Montpelier," Mrs. Lawson says. VAST gives away several thousand a year.

As for the noise that skiers often complain about, regulations enacted during Johnson's regime dramatically reduced much of the engine sound and, thereby, most of the complaints about snowmobiles and their engines.

And what about gasoline consumption in our fuel scarce economy? "I have calculated," Johnson responds, "that the fuel used by Nancy Reagan on her flight to the Royal Wedding represents the equivalent that would be burned by all the snowmobiles in Vermont, running at full speed, year round, from now until Inauguration Day — 1989."

Both Duso, whom Johnson calls "A Vermont woodchuck — like me," and Johnson are vigorous in their defense of the courtesy and consideration snowmobilers extend to the landowners who accommodate their trails.

"For years," said Johnson, "I had a snowmobile trail — the one from St. Johnsbury to Burlington — running through my farm. I skied on it almost every day. During that entire time I found one beer can. I went to see Carmi, thinking he might be defensive about it. He wasn't. He told me he was going to get in touch with the club responsible for maintaining that trail and make sure it didn't happen again. It didn't.

"Snowmobilers are the best friends the cross country skiers have. They create and maintain beautiful trails. The cross country folks should be grateful.

"Snowmobiling," Johnson says, "is especially great for housewives. Many of them used to spend the Winter suffering from cabin fever. Now they're out enjoying our state."

Ronnie Messier is one such housewife: "Snowmobiling is as much fun for women as it is for men," she says. "It's a great way to get away from it all and enjoy Vermont. It helps me appreciate our natural environment and I get an exhilarating, refreshing feeling which helps me resume my everyday chores of being a homemaker."

At the "Ride In," the machines are neatly arrayed, criss-crossing the hill like sentinels, their metal hulls glistening in the clear moonlight.

Inside, several hundred people have finished eating and the band is tuning up. There will be dancing and singing well into the night.

"We do this every year and we don't think much of it," says Messier. "Next week we're going up to Newport. There will probably be a big crowd. There always seems to be a big crowd."

Ronnie Messier, left, hostess for the Barre "Ride In" welcomes Rita and Joseph Carrill of Washington. Below, Scott Guyette, 8, and Cecil Lamphere, 75, youngest and oldest participants in the event.

There's a Long Trail Awinding in Woodstock

By FRANK LIEBERMAN

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING is nothing new to Woodstock. The present boom in ski touring is more like a revival. Many a vintage skier was first put on the boards as a youngster at the urging of Arthur Wilder, the popular manager of the Woodstock Inn from the 1880s into the 1930s. This enthusiastic skier kept a stack of skis on the porch of the old Inn for the use of the guests.

In those simpler days no one differentiated between cross country and downhill skiing. There was just skiing. You skied down hill when the hill went down and you climbed up or skied across when it didn't. True, there was some ski jumping but that was pretty much confined to kids and Scandinavians.

Since automobiles then were few in number and useless in Winter, the snow-covered streets were firmly packed by huge horse-drawn snow rollers for sleigh traffic. Would-be skiers simply stuck their feet into leather toestraps and cruised around the village or ventured out onto the golf course. That toe strap was what passed for a binding. It was generally considered quite sufficient to keep shoes on the skis (ski boots were yet to be invented). The skis, made by the Woodstock Manufacturing Company (the local furniture factory), were very long and came with one good stout pole which occasionally had a little plate on one end. Skiers used it to push themselves up steep grades and they "drug it" in the snow to steer or brake. The method was primitive but effective.

Arthur Wilder, manager of the Woodstock Inn for nearly half a century, shows this 1912 form. Picture above shows a group skiing the golf course in 1919.

There was no special clothing for skiing back in those early days. If a skier was well prepared, or lucky, he had a pair of knickers, a heavy sweater, a thick jacket, mittens and a cap. Or a derby, like Mr. Wilder.

In time, of course, things changed. Companies started producing special boots and bindings and quickly downhill skiing became popular, thanks, in part, to that famous first rope tow that appeared just north of Woodstock on Gilbert's Hill in 1934.

Then in the 60s, as ski hills began to proliferate and become crowded, skiers rediscovered the joys of cross country touring; that great feeling of being out on your own with no long lift lines, the beautiful quiet, shadows bright blue on the snow, making one *really* good tele-

mark turn on a pristine pasture, hearing jays squawk in the branches overhead, the successful, if slightly scarey, run down through a grove of young pines as the whole world turns orange in the late afternoon sun. Very special.

Generally speaking, Woodstock's ski touring trails are not overly demanding. This is mostly skiing for fun. But if there are no fiendishly challenging runs, Woodstock is nevertheless one of the testing sites for cross country instructors seeking to become professionally certified.

The area's first trail cut and opened specifically for cross country skiing was the gift of Woodstock's Richard Brett, conservationist, ecologist, tree farmer and life-long cross country enthusiast. First planned in the 40s, the trail was completed in 1963. The Skyline Trail begins in East Barnard at Brett's former home, Hawk's Hill, descends to the valley, then climbs to the height of land. This is the point where most skiers prefer to start on the Trail, at an open-faced log shelter Dick built at Amity Pond. The tract of land which was given to the state by the Bretts is now designated a Natural Area, banned to all vehicles.

From Amity Pond the Trail heads south, following the natural contours of the ridges, gradually making its way down hill in its winding five mile course. It is marked by blue and orange diamonds, each carefully painted by Elizabeth Brett. With the agreement of tolerant landowners, in exchange for the good manners of the skiers who use it, the Trail is open for all to enjoy.

The terrain varies from wide clear meadows to passages through the woods, with long views of hills and mountains on either side. Thanks to Richard Brett's skillful planning, the Skyline Trail is seldom in sight of farms or houses and poses few difficulties except for one fast *schuss* near the end. But once it's been negotiated a short skirting of precipitous Breakneck Hill brings one out on a gentle hillside opposite the downhill skiing complex of Suicide Six in South Pomfret.

Since the Skyline Trail ends here, most tourers use the Lodge at Six as a destination point or rest stop. From Six, a three-mile trail continues south along flat meadowland, then works its way uphill for delightful touring on Mount Tom, right above Woodstock itself. Here the trails consist of some 12 miles of old carriage roads that wind around Mount Tom. Originally built on his large estate by Frederick Billings in the 1880s, these gently sloping trails provide fairly easy touring, though it must be remembered that carriage roads have sharp bends in them here and there.

As on the Skyline, the trails on Mount Tom take skiers through woods and open pastures and even skirt a mountain-top lake, the Pogue, long said to be bottomless. From the Pogue an easy route goes out to Mount Tom's summit with a fine view out over Woodstock, far below. Much of the woodland through which one skis was designated, and still is, Vermont's first tree farm, with many an ancient tree still standing.

Below Mount Tom, a handsome new covered bridge leads to the Green and the center of Woodstock, where the cross country outfits mingle with downhillers in increasing numbers. To a considerable degree this is due to the Woodstock Resort Corporation which runs Suicide Six, the Woodstock Inn and the Ski Touring Center at the country club. The idea for the Ski Touring Center took shape in 1970. Since golf courses don't get much use in Winter, the thinking went, why not use all that neatly kept, smooth open land to teach cross country skiing? It turned out to be such a good idea that now over 20 miles of carefully groomed, mapped, marked trails meander over the country club's golf course, the gentle slopes of Mount Peg to the east and Mount Tom. Here, with professional instruction, one can learn the fundamentals of ski touring on flat beginners' trails, then go on to more advanced techniques on the varied intermediate runs.

Like many of Vermont's cross country ski areas the Touring Center offers instruction and a wide assortment of equipment and clothing for sale or rent. Trail maps are available and there's food and drink and a warm fire as well.

For a change of terrain an ungroomed trail leads to South Woodstock, some five miles away. Here the long-established Kedron Valley Inn provides a good place for refreshment and a well-earned rest. The rest is well-earned because South Woodstock is more than 300 feet higher than Woodstock. After pausing at the Kedron Valley Inn, skiers can then enjoy the downhill run back to the Touring Center.

Given good snow conditions and even halfway decent weather, a cross country skier couldn't ask for anything better unless it might be a few days more of the same.

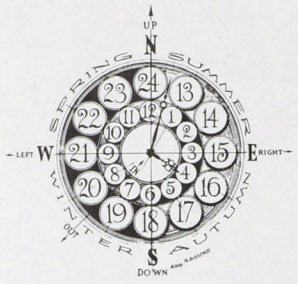
Near the end of the day, skiers glide toward home. Once in Woodstock, they'll find like-minded company.

Skiers leave Amity Pond, at left, and head toward South Pomfret. Below, Richard Brett checks trail map.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANSON CARROLL

Illustrated by the author

The Happy Nightmare



I WOULD LIKE you to open your mind and give it over to me. I am taking you by the hand and leading you into an imagined adventure but one that is nevertheless perfectly possible to arrange.

First we will go into a ski shop. You are embarrassed because you do not ski. Even so, we are going to buy you some useful winter underwear, socks and mittens, and rent other clothes and equipment, not only so you will get the total *feel* of things, but to be practical about it. The clothes will keep you warm.

When you are dressed, (and looking very nifty, may I say?) the shop keeper helps you slide your feet into great, awkward ski boots. You get up and go clomping around, laughing. You pull on long mittens. He brings two sleek ski poles, and shows you how to grasp the finger-notched handles, so the wrist loops are correct.

When you are all set, we pile into a car and drive to the ski area — a big, famous one, where everything has been prepared for your safety, comfort and pleasure. I explain how easy it is to step in front of a moving double chair, and sit back into it, with me, as it comes up behind us.

You don't wear your skis — I take them across our laps. We are surrounded by friendly skiers. They look at you without much curiosity. As we sit down, the chair swings back with our weight, then picks us up gently and swings forward again. It's fun. You like it.

We face the mountain all the way, and the ride is exhilarating. Up in the fresh air, you realize how warm you are — except for your face. How smoothly fitted and not pinched or constricted your body feels, in the special thermal underwear, the long johns under the stretch pants under the windproof overpants, in your turtleneck, and the zippered parka with wide shoulder pleats, the knitted, snug hat well over the ears and down the back of the neck inside the parka hood which frames your face. Your fingers are together in the mittens, so both hands are cozy.

Skiers are everywhere below us, swooping down the bumpy white slopes, colorful and graceful. I see a wistful expression — you are thinking, "Ah, to be a skier!" You talk to me animatedly. But you don't fool me one bit. There is a knot in your stomach now. The mountain is so much bigger than you expected. To distract you, I make you turn as far as you can in the chair, so you can crane your neck around and look back. Summits of surrounding peaks are rising up with us — snowy mountains you never knew existed.

But I see you cringe at the same time. Your mind is shouting at you, "What am I *doing* here?"

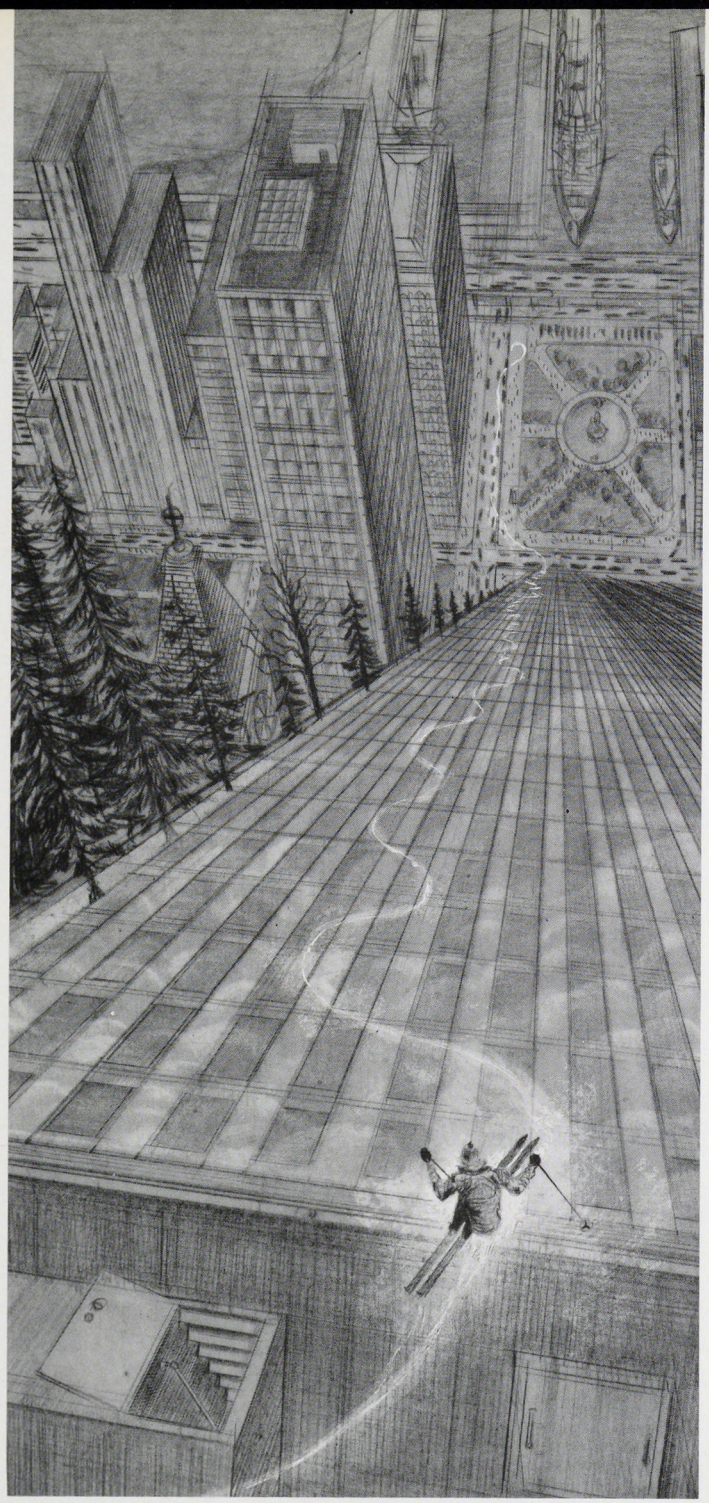
There is always a wind on top. The snow is swept across in a whistling white stream. At the get-off place before the lift cable goes around the giant wheel on the last tower, you jump out and run a few steps to the right while I ski down to the left; the chair goes quietly between us. I lead you to a waiting group of skiers.

In a mixture of concealed alarm and euphoria you realize that these people are crouching alongside you, lifting your feet onto your skis. Oh horrors!

Those two long broadswords glitter at you with hypnotic fascination. The edges are of gleaming steel, sharp, subtly curving, *beautiful* — in a totally functional way. The bottoms are smooth, grooved, and as slick as a wet candle. The skis scream "Speed, speed, *speed*," just standing still.

They lock your boots to these frightening things. There's a chilling metallic click as the bindings close. You feel intimidated. Yet those binding mechanisms are the most friendly personal protectors you will ever know, marvelously adjusted to your weight and strength, to release your boot when the pressure from any direction is too great, but not to let you go when you are skiing in control, no matter how fast or furiously you use them. That is, if you are a skier.

They fit your ski poles into your mittened hands again. Someone behind you adjusts giant goggles over your entire upper face. Others lower a racing helmet over your head. It is resonant; instantly the wind rushes in your ears. The situation is excruciatingly exciting — you are tinglingly alive to the tips of your toes.



To demonstrate the sheer angle of skiing down the Federation Internationale de Ski at Sugarbush North, the author has sketched its urban equivalent: the World Trade Center, tipped back 37 degrees.

Now I take you by the arm and help you to move forward, showing by example how to slide your skis alternately. You gasp with sudden exhultation — you feel it yourself — the skis are as slippery on the snow as in your *wildest nightmares.*

We come to the edge of the summit. As we get to the point where you can begin to see over the lip, you stop breathing and lean back and away, grabbing frantically at me. I hold you, and shout that *nobody is going to let go of you.* (Actually, just out of your peripheral vision behind and below you are two alert ski patrolmen, ready for anything you might mistakenly do.)

It takes a while for your metabolism to quiet down. But in a minute you feel better. You realize you can trust us, and you dare to look down the wide trail in front of you.

Okay. Take a deep breath. Here you are. You have watched racers in the starting gate, on television, at the Winter Olympic Games. You always wanted to understand what it would be like, didn't you?

You are in the most exposed place you have ever been. Falling away under your very ski tips, is the first quarter mile of the FIS, (Federation Internationale de Ski) downhill racing trail at Sugarbush North; a course which meets world class standards. It is more than two miles long and drops more than 2,000 feet.

I have brought you to an extreme place — one of a few in all of North America. It's no wonder you got such a squirt of adrenaline, no wonder you are trembling. It's not from the cold.

You are staring, in terrified, gut-wrenching fascination, down the first fearsome straightaway, which plunges at an average of 37 degrees of slope. Not percent of slope, *degrees* of slope. (as the corners of a 30-60-90 draftsman's triangle). The front faces of the giant moguls below you are at 45 degrees or more.

It is as though you were on the parapet of a building like the World Trade Center, if the whole structure were laid back at 37 degrees, and you were expected to slide down the front. It's about a quarter of a mile down to the sidewalk.

Or think of it this way. Your reach, with arms outstretched, equals your height. If you could go down the slope a bit without your skis on, with ice crampons on your boots, and cut a step for one foot, then stand up, sideways, with your downhill foot dangling in the air, you could reach out horizontally with your hand next to the mountain, and touch the snow beside you at the level of your shoulder. *That's* how steep it is!

The wind is fierce. You are quaking all over. You shift your weight, and suddenly, heart-stoppingly, your left ski slips forward and you lose your balance. I hold your upper arm firmly, and — something you did not realize — there is somebody *very* large standing on your other side, without skis on; he has an even firmer grip on your arm there.

Good. Now you understand. At least, you understand infinitely better than you ever could have, by any other teaching method.

Yet you can't understand. Never having skied, there is no way you can figure out how *anyone* (me, for instance, when I was younger), could happily push forward with the poles and slide right over this very lip, and proceed carefully, with frequent quick, strong turns, stopping to rest a dozen times in the first quarter mile.

To understand that you would have to learn to ski.

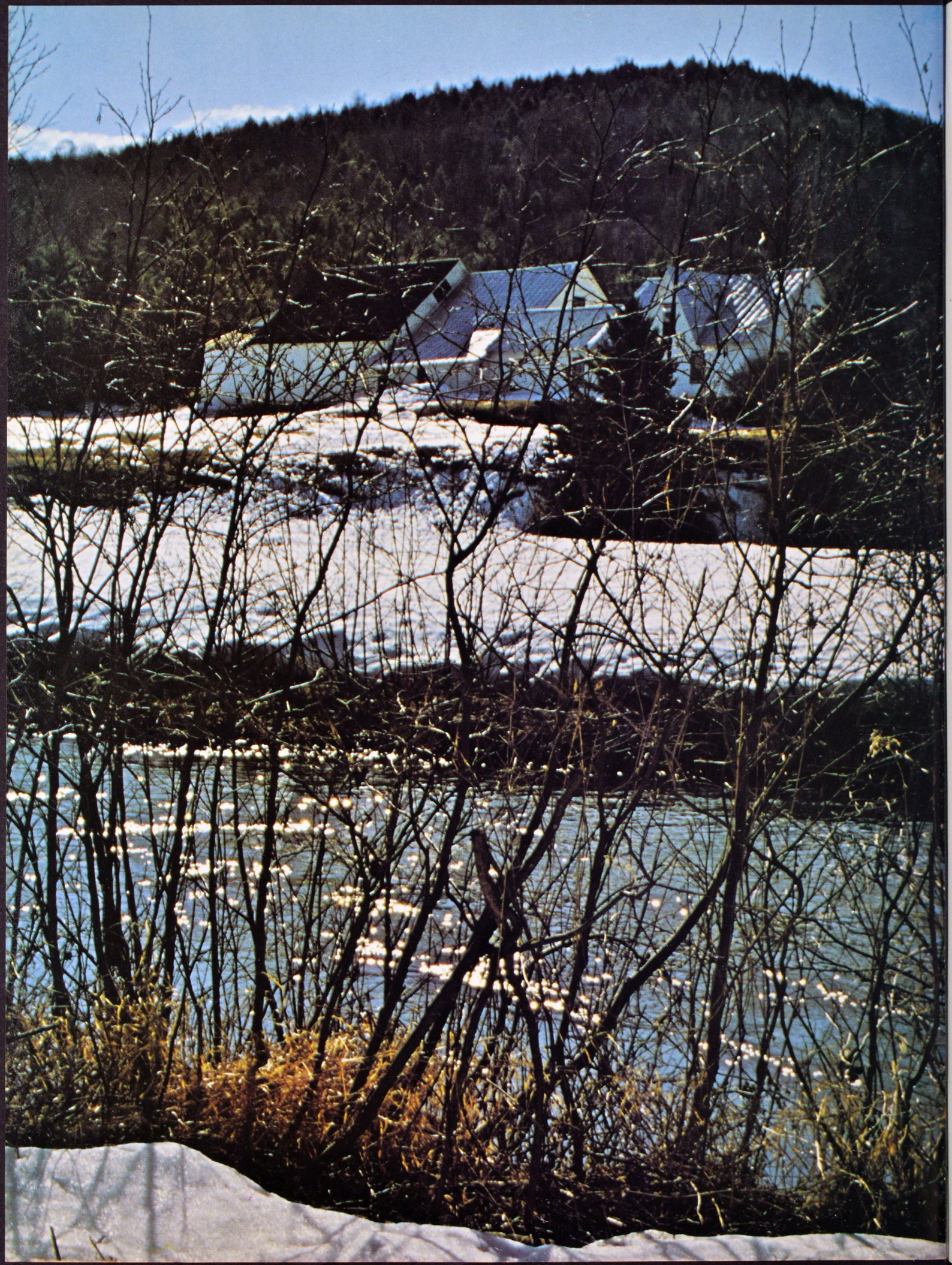
Which reminds me. Look around at the people helping you. They are all smiling so sympathetically. Notice their parkas? All alike. See the little red, white and blue shield pins on the front? Read one. Okay, I understand, I'll read it for you. "Professional Ski Instructor of America."

Hard to come by — those pins. The examination for certification takes three days. Sort of the Ph.D. in ski teaching. Many take the exams, but only a few pass.

The result? Oh my — great teaching skill, super ability to demonstrate *slowly* (approaches the impossible in muscle control, like a slow-motion gymnast), much dependability in crisis, in terrifying conditions, killing weather.

Yet these top professionals sign up lots of senior citizens, small kids, and everybody in between in their classes every day, everywhere. Maybe we'll be lucky as we take you down now, on the lift, and will see some classes in action.

Think of it — you will be delightedly *facing the view,* all the blessed way down this terrible, glorious, mountain.



Last Days of Winter

By NANCY PRICE GRAFF
Photographs by HANSON CARROLL

IF it's true, as someone has written, that what strikes us hardest in late Autumn is not the impending snow but the brilliant light leaving, it's true, as well, that what catches us in late Winter is not just the warm promise of Spring but the color coming. It seems for months we have endured — besides the cold — a simple monochromy in our lives. But in Winter's waning days, we find the whiteness wasting and, in its stead, a palette we had nearly forgotten.

The snow, of course, has not completely gone — and more will surely come when we are least suspecting it — but what we see are trailings now, mere shadows of the snow's mid-Winter self. No longer is the world confined to contrasts: red barns against the whitened fields, a finch against a powdered limb, and firs

against the snow-draped hills. Now the earth has shades as well as substance, and only certain cows remain so starkly black and white.

A brook which just last month was one long stream of white on white has thawed to tones of emerald green so cold they make the bright light dance. Hills that lay in shrouds all Winter now seem hammered into pewter by the beating of the sun. Melting snow reveals the silver grain in long-cut wood, a seasoned fortune destined to be spent. Even sap itself draws color from peaked maples turning tawny in the Winter's wake.

Color comes before the cold has fully gone and long before the earth turns green and ripe for Spring. It comes about the time we start to find the whiteness wanting and slips in gently as if it knows our senses need some time to readjust. And so we learn to look beyond the final snows, to watch for color coming in meadow brush and robins' breasts. ∞

A Nice December Rain

M. DICKEY DRYSDALE

Illustration by JEFF DANZIGER

WE HAD BEEN on the road a half hour, heading toward Middlebury from Randolph, when it began to rain. Right away, my wife began to worry.

"One way I know that Spring has come is that I'm not afraid of water any more," she said. "If my feet get wet, I'm not afraid they'll be cold for hours, and when it rains on the road, I'm not afraid it'll turn to ice."

"Don't worry," I told her. The temperature when we left Randolph had been well above freezing. "This is a nice November rain," I said, "only in December." I suggested that worrying about things was a waste of time. "Unless," I challenged, "you want to turn back."

The road glistened wet as we headed north along Route 100. Somewhere between Rochester and Hancock, the car swerved.

My wife was suspicious. "Was that a skid?" she asked.

It was a swerve, I told her. Nevertheless, I eyed the pavement with a little more respect.

The car swerved again. This time, I glanced at the speedometer and saw it bouncing crazily. The speedometer does that sort of thing during a skid.

"A little greasy," I observed. My wife said nothing.

At Hancock, we turned left on the Middlebury Gap road. My wife mentioned quietly that at higher altitudes, the roads were apt to get more slippery. I explained that on a warm November-December night like this, a few hundred feet in altitude doesn't mean much.

The car swerved again. Suddenly, it was Disasterville. Gone was the reassuring sparkle of rain reflected from the pavement; in its place shone a lethal dull gleam. An approaching car fishtailed in a wild arc. The road ahead was a ribbon of wet ice. We both developed a tremendous distaste for the idea of driving to Middlebury.

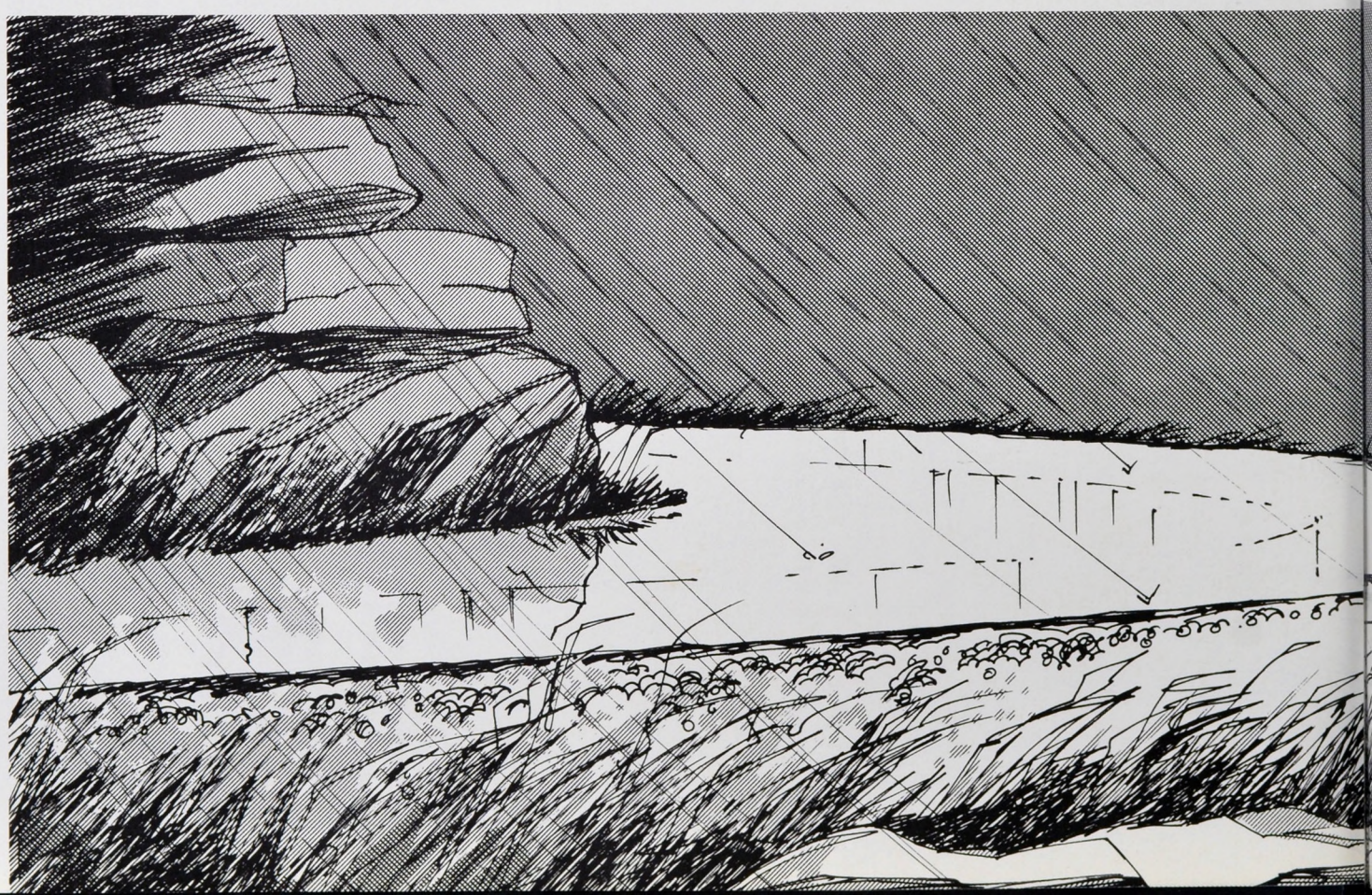
"I think I'd like to turn back now," my wife ventured.

Finding a driveway, we turned around gingerly and back we crept downhill to a cozier altitude where our tires gripped the macadam surface securely again. We both heaved a sigh of relief.

As we approached Rochester, the question came: to return the long way, via Routes 100 and 107, or the short way — over Bethel Mountain Road. I decided on the short way.

"There's not that much of a hill from this side," I explained confidently. My wife didn't say a word. "Besides, if the temperature's dropping, the sooner we get home, the better," I added. Still silence.

Less than a mile out of Rochester, our headlights picked up that familiar deadly gleam on the pavement. The road twisted



back and forth and I had to admit it was climbing pretty steeply. A car inched down the hill toward us and we managed to miss each other.

"This is the steepest part," I remarked. "It levels off up above."

"It is also *colder* up there," my wife observed darkly. I had to admit she had a point, but there was no way I was going to drive that car down the slippery slide we had just come up.

For a change, I was right. The road did level off a bit, although it still was more of a hill than I had remembered. "In conditions like this, you certainly learn the road in detail," I observed lightly. More silence in the car.

My wife was right, too. It *was* icier up there. We managed to negotiate, though, by keeping one wheel in the mud by the side of the road while the car sputtered and swerved.

"Quite a ditch there," I remarked, glancing hastily at the ravine three feet from the right wheel.

"I see it," my wife shot back. A terse urgency filled her voice.

Finally, we reached the end of the blacktop, a spot which marks the Bethel-Rochester line and the top of the hill.

"We made it," I sighed, and we both breathed easily once more.

Then we saw the taillights ahead: two cars, both stuck on a hill I had forgotten about. One driver was trying to walk on the road, but his feet were slipping away from him.

The first car we eased past, but the second was too far into the road, and we coasted to a reluctant halt.

"We'll just back up and turn around," I suggested. "Maybe we'll stay with friends in Rochester."

Alas, we were caught in a dip in the road, and backward turned out to be uphill as well. We were stuck, cradled in a slippery nook of Rochester Mountain 1000 feet above the warm habitations of the valley floor.

"I think we should have gone the long way," I offered generously.

Who the men were who hand-shoveled gravel from the shoulder onto the road, I don't know. But their effort spared us from spending a rainy night on Rochester Mountain, and for that I thank them. The grit from those shovels was all it took to boost us the last few hundred yards to the top. With a jaunty "thank you" on our car horn, we were off.

The trip down was easier than expected; the road was slick but manageable at 10 miles an hour. Slowly, the icy sheen disappeared from the highway, and we began to relax. We let the speedometer crawl up to 20, 25, 30 miles an hour.

It was at about 30 that we hit the final, vicious spot of ice — 100 yards of highway suddenly and totally glare, entirely without traction. We were in a free-fall down the road, the car delicately balanced between taking a straight course and veering into a tumultous series of revolutions — 90 degrees, 360 degrees, whatever it might take to satisfy the demon of our excessive momentum.

As my foot peppered the brake with desperate pumping strokes, I had just time to remember that we didn't even own the car.

We came out of it with a hard left and then a right, miraculously still on the road. Then the pavement was driveable again, sparkling wet but no longer threatening.

My wife broke her silence: "A nice November rain," she said, "only in December."

We walked the last mile home. A light drizzle still fell, freezing under our feet but striking our cheeks with a pleasant freshness. Across the valley, homes shone with the warmth and light which we knew would soon reward us.

I thought of going back for our car, parked in the driveway of an understanding neighbor. There had been only one more hill when we decided to quit.

One more hill.

We continued our hike through the night air. We had had hills enough. ∞

A Stolen Day

By Ted Emerson
Photographs by Ava Emerson

There had been two bad years in a row for stolen days. Only two days in the last two years — that hardly justifies the other 728. It's mostly the fault of improved roads, better plows, and four-wheel-drive vehicles. Stolen days are just getting harder and harder to come by.

These vanishing phenomena known more widely as "snow days" are characterized by a fall of snow of such magnitude that no one has any doubt about the futility of dealing with it. There's no way. We are confined to our homes until the storm clears. In short, these days may be stolen in good conscience.

Even while making the initial sortie, the spirit stirs. As I push through the knee deep snow, and it's still falling, my anticipation builds. I grow warm from the effort of passage. The horizon is obscured and all sounds are muffled. Anticipation soon gives way to exhilaration. I am snowed in! Back in the house the radio confirms it: "Schools closed, travelers advisory . . . please stay at home."

A free day with no strings attached, no commitments nor expectations. It is a day to be lived moment by moment. It is also a day in which our normal routines are set aside and our full energy is left undirected. It is a time to be spent close to home. In their way, these stolen days are the purest and truest of holidays. Pure because it is the spirit, not social custom, which decides the activities of the day. True because year after year, they bring back the same exhilaration.

It is my habit to start such a day with some sort of homage to nature, which is, after all, the day's patron. I might take a short walk, or take an outing on skis, packing down a toboggan run with Ava and Jed, my wife and child. Or perhaps I might just take in the storm from a chair by the window.

Once the snow lets up, it's time to fire up Milly, our 1954 Willys, and plow out. (This is a misleading description of the effort and cajoling required to activate a seldom-used, 27-year-old engine in midwinter, but it will have to do.) "Out" is 700 feet of sometimes steep and winding driveway, all down hill. Milly needs all the help she can get to keep her speed up and throw the snow well clear of the road. At the end of the drive we stop and back up the cleared swath to make another pass. Depending on my caution, it takes from 30 minutes to four hours to clear the drive. More caution, because of Milly's age, equates with less time.

Once the drive is plowed and the walks shoveled, I settle back feeling a bit smug for having a vehicle which both plows me out and keeps me home, at least until the town crew gets through.

The rest of the day we will follow our whims . . . reminisce of school days missed, giant drifts, candle light and lanterns. It's a chance to plan next year's garden or play cards or cribbage. A day for popcorn and cocoa. It also provides me with an opportunity to reflect on my goals and directions, to compare the joy of escaping my routine with the insecurity of having none to escape.

Ava, who grew up in Florida, finds the experience similar to hurricanes there except that a major snowstorm is one of nature's most peaceful excesses. But both have an awesome quality that heightens our senses. In a hurricane this awareness is riveted outward on the power and violence of the storm. A heavy snowstorm, on the other hand, deprives the senses — sounds become muted and vision obscured, creating conditions more favorable for an inward shift of awareness.

As we sit down to supper, we hear the clink of chains in the distance which signals the passing of the town plow and the resumption of our normal schedule. After dinner Jed pulls my finger to focus my attention on his armful of books which he seems to think need reading.

Why would anyone want to own a four-wheel drive?

The author and his son wend their snowy way home after a stolen day.

Green Mountain

POST BOY

Your faithful Post Boy has traditionally kept our musings, announcements, apologies and regrets tucked safely in the comfort of the pluralized first person. It stings less when we write, "we regret to report that in the last issue of this magazine, we inadvertently . . ." did whatever it was that we inadvertently did. And it seems a touch less pretentious to repeat an amusing anecdote we had picked up by writing, "we were absolutely delighted this month to read that . . ." something or other was happening. Writing in the first person plural allowed us graceful latitude, and we clung to it. But this is not going to be "our" last Post Boy column; it's going to be *my* last one. I'd like to write it that way.

It was nine years ago this very month that I answered an advertisement in a down country newspaper (at the time, I didn't even know what "down country" meant) seeking applicants for a job that required five years of magazine editing experience and an intimate knowledge of Vermont. The five years' experience I had, the intimate knowledge I wanted, and I applied for the job. After a series of excruciating interviews — excruciating not because they were difficult or taxing, but because each one made me more anxious to land this editorial plum — the decision was made. Walter Hard, Jr., who had edited and nurtured and set the tone for this pioneering regional magazine for 23 years, was resigning to move on to other editorial work. The editor's job was handed over to me.

What would I do with it? How would I direct this magazine which, years previously, had ceased to be merely a promotional vehicle for the state of Vermont and had become, instead, a prized editorial institution? A lot of people, myself very much included, wanted to know where I would lead this award winning quarterly. Would I change it? The magazine's several detractors suggest *Vermont Life* presents an idealized and unrealistic view of the state of Vermont. (The opposing view suggests that argument not only isn't true, it isn't *possible*.) Would *Vermont Life* under my editorship be more controversial, more cause-oriented, more crusading?

Two things occurred to me from the very beginning of my editorship. First, I realized I was taking over the editorial direction of an unusually successful and popular periodical. If I hoped to hand it over one day to my successor as my predecessor was handing it over to me, I had better take great pains to change the magazine as little as I could (knowing that my perceptions and biases and affections were bound to change the magazine somewhat, in ways I could scarcely control). Second, it occurred to me that *Vermont Life* was as cause-oriented and crusading as any magazine I had ever held in my hands. It was quietly so. It didn't shout. But it said in very measured, very reasonable terms, page after page, article after article: "This very extraordinary place you are looking at and reading about is that way because people — the inhabitants and the visitors alike — want it that way, and work to keep it that way. Vermont is not special by accident, or merely by divine decree. It is special, and will remain special, because people are aware of its distinctions, and are willing to make an effort to preserve them."

That, I thought, was a crusade I'd be pleased to join. That was a cause I would be proud to promote. That would be the message I would try to continue to pass along as editor of Vermont's own magazine. And for nine years, that is what I have tried to do. But what a joy it's been along the way.

When one is assigned to be an editor of writers like Ralph Nading Hill, Noel Perrin and Charles T. Morrissey; when one is asked to make selections of photographs — images of Vermont — submitted by photographers like Richard W. Brown, Clyde H. Smith and Richard Howard; when one must give assignments to illustrators the likes of Jeff Danziger, Ed Koren and Gene Matras, there's *bound* to be a good measure of joy thrown into the process. And when one can work for nine years with an associate with the talent and dedication of Linda Dean Paradee, this magazine's managing editor, the entire job becomes a pleasure. This one has been. A pleasure, accented by superlatives. I've got my favorites, and in my last Post Boy offering, I would like to share a few.

My favorite issue of the magazine was Summer, 1981, which carried "the insider's guide to Vermont bests and favorites." For lack of a better word, and in this case there is no better word, that issue was simply *fun* to put together.

My favorite cover was the Winter 1980 issue, a Richard Brown photograph of a mother and daughter bringing home a small Christmas tree. When a reporter asked me recently what my favorite single photograph was in the nine years of my editorship, I named another Richard Brown image, a Winter scene in Peacham with some sleds leaning on a porch. That, I said, suggested a great deal of warmth and serenity and security. But there have been so many other photographs published in this magazine's pages which speak so eloquently of this place's worth. Golden leaves reflected in a window in a photograph by Jim Eaton in the Autumn, 1976 issue is one that I will always be able to recreate in my mind's eye. I will never forget a very early morning photograph taken by Chris Owen on the inside cover of Winter, 1979 issue. It showed Montpelier when the temperature was thirty below and I've never seen a place so cold.

My favorite page, and this was a difficult choice, is page 19 of the Autumn, 1979 issue. It contains a single photograph, by William Hebden, of a slightly opened window and sheer curtains billowing softly as seen from the inside of a farmhouse bedroom. The image is bordered by a blue-gray frame and the words "Autumn Changes" are beneath it. For me, and the choice is almost recklessly subjective, that page says about as much about Vermont as a stack of history books.

My favorite opening passage was written by a writer I knew well and it goes like this:

> It is that time of year, as an eminent sonneteer once put it, "when yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang upon those boughs which shake against the cold. . . ." It is after the fall; the color and splendor of autumn have vanished and the last leaf watcher has driven back to Philadelphia. A scattering of snow can be seen at the top of Camel's Hump, but down below the land is brown and sere, the rivers run sparkling and unfrozen, and the first exuberant skier has not yet appeared at Stowe. It is early November, an equable quiet is in the air, and there's nobody here but us Vermonters. And me.

I'm not sure whether I like that passage so much because it was written by my father, or because it was the first time I ever saw a description of the kind of person I had become since moving to this state. "Us Vermonters. And me."

My favorite concluding passage was written by a bona fide Vermonter, Donna Fitch of Calais, about bona fide Vermonters, the Robb family of Ames Hill, Brattleboro. The Summer, 1978 article concluded:

> When I asked about her religious beliefs, Bertha Robb looked out toward the barn, the houses and the land. Then looking back at me, she spread her arms wide in an embrace of it all. That was her answer — she found no reason to utter a word.

I think Bertha Robb was speaking for all of us, and it is with her eloquence ringing that I would like to conclude my final Post Boy. I suspect I will miss this column — which has been running continuously since the magazine was founded — miss it very much. I have to give it up because I have resigned as editor to take another position here in Vermont. Having the Post Boy column temporarily in my care was a privilege, as it is now my privilege to pass its care on to a new editor, a new voice for a very fine, old tradition. — BRIAN VACHON

In Montpelier, people say "Brian Vachon is going National," but they say it with a smile.

Brian is leaving the Editorship of *Vermont Life* to become "Vice President – Communications" at the National Life Insurance Company in Montpelier. This means he is "going National" without leaving Montpelier. And that is entirely the way he wants his life to be.

As he contemplated a career change he remarked several times that he wanted to do more than remain in Vermont. He wanted to continue living *in the same house* — nestled quietly among the trees on a steep Montpelier hillside above a dead-end street. His spouse, Nancy, likes it there, and for their son, Andy, now almost four years old, it's an ideal place for a boy to grow up. Home for the Vachons is a leafy retreat but within "walk-to-everything" distance of schools, stores, Nancy's office where she works as a CPA — everything.

At the National Life Insurance Company Brian will supervise a staff of 16 people who produce an array of publications and services. "Going National" but staying in Montpelier entails for Brian the production of three magazines for National Life's employees, agents, policy holders, and others; it means the preparation of newsletters and other printed materials; it involves film-making and audiovisual shows for sales conferences and other professional meetings; it concerns press and community relations and a variety of other functions.

He'll be busy. National Life employs 900 people in the home office and has $11 billion in life insurance currently in force. It was founded in Montpelier in 1850 but the current management is very alert to the shifting money market and eager to adjust to the changing economy. Brian will have a lot to communicate.

But fortunately he'll have time to keep his name on the masthead of *Vermont Life.* In upcoming issues he'll be included among *VL*'s Senior Editors, and that means his suggestions about the tone and content of this magazine will be reflected in its pages.

Who will succeed Brian as Editor? You are not the first to ask. The undersigned is serving as a part-time and temporary replacement until a permanent appointee is sitting full-time at the Editor's desk. The wheels of government are turning laboriously and the personnel process should soon reveal a candidate. The next issue of *Vermont Life* will most likely carry the answer to your question. We are all curious to know.

In the meantime your Acting Editor is assembling articles and photographs and working with Linda Dean Paradee, *VL*'s Managing Editor, at designing the lay-out for the upcoming Spring and Summer issues. We are also planning another series of Vermont's "Bests and Favorites" for the Fall '82 issue, and trying to control our pawky sense of humor in the process. Brian has "gone National," but the Post Boy still has an ear which perks up at hearing Vermont anecdotes.

Please continue to let the Post Boy know what you like and dislike about *Vermont Life.* Many of you did not like the article about coon hunting in our Fall '81 issue, and we have told Brian about your dismay. But if some of you choose to tell us how you liked Brian's editing over the past nine years we'll give him the good news, too. "Going National" means we'll see him almost every day. — CHARLES T. MORRISSEY
Acting Editor

Vermont's Winter Carnivals . . .

Vermont Travel Division Photograph

can offer a wide spectrum of activities from torchlight parades, ice sculpture, sleigh rides, theatre, dances, craft shows, sugar-on-snow, to races of all kinds — sled dog, nordic, alpine and snowmobile. For a listing of the many activities occurring this winter, write: Vermont Travel Division, "Winter Events," 61 Elm St., Montpelier, Vt. 05602.

Jan. 15-23: **Ludlow,** Okemo Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-228-4041.
Jan. 15-23: **Stowe** Annual Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-253-7326.
Jan. 16-24: **East Burke** Winter Carnival. Info: 802-626-3305.
Jan. 29-31: **Manchester** Winter Carnival, Stratton Mt. and Bromley Ski areas. Info.: 802-362-2100.
Jan. 30-31: **Bennington** Winter Carnival, Prospect Mt. ski area. Info.: 802-442-5900.
Feb. 5-6: **Stowe,** University of Vt. Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-253-7704.
Feb. 6-12: **Jay** Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-988-2611.
Feb. 6-13: **Springfield** Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-885-2727.
Feb. 13-21: **Brattleboro** Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-254-9135 or 257-7151.
Feb. 14-15: **Woodstock** Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-457-1502.
Feb. 27-28: **Middlebury** College Winter Carnival. Info.: 802-388-4356.
Feb. 27-March 31: **Warren,** March Madness, Sugarbush Valley ski area. Info.: 802-583-2381.
March 6-April 11: **Mount Snow** Spring Fever Celebration, six weekends. Info.: 802-464-3333.
March 12-20: **Jeffersonville,** Smugglers' Spring Ski Carnival. Info.: 802-644-8851.

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The Country Store in Ripton, Vermont, photographed by Carolyn Bates.